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MANUALS OF CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

OUTLINES OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

BY SYLVESTER J. HUNTER, S.J.

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OUTLINES

OF

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY.

BY

SYLVESTER JOSEPH HUNTER,

OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

VOLUME III.

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PREFACE.

THE AUTHOR regrets the delay that has occurred in the appearance of the present volume.

The subjects here treated present characters to which it may be well to call attention.

While all Catholics agree in accepting the teaching of the Church on the subject of Grace as on all other subjects, there are many points not covered by authority, on which every one is free to form his own judgment. The inevitable result is that writers who have much in common will differ widely on particular questions, and these differences are more visible in the Treatises on Grace and Justification than in other parts of Theology. Hence these Treatises caused the Author peculiar difficulty. He wished to do something more than merely transcribe the decrees of Trent, but the available space was totally insufficient for setting forth fully the views held by different schools, with

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the considerations by which they are supported. The result is that a statement has been given which is very imperfect, but which will, it is hoped, suffice to give some inkling of the nature of controversies which once filled the world and are still full of interest for many.

Throughout the work there is scarcely a chapter which would not furnish matter for a volume; but no Treatises suffer so much from the necessary compression as those on Grace and Justification.

The other Treatises of this volume are chiefly concerned with the Sacraments, and in dealing with them recourse is constantly had to the authority and practice of the Church. No objection can be fairly raised to this course when it is remembered that the Infallibility of the Church has been established in its proper place. It would be endless labour to prove a proposition over and over again as often as there is occasion to apply it. Dogmatic Theology forms one coherent system, the parts of which hang together, the foundation being furnished by the Fundamental Treatises contained in our first volume. It is remarked that if one part fall, in a system of this nature, the whole collapses. This is true, but Catholics know that no part of the defined doctrines of the Church will fall; if any statement of doctrine is shown to be open to fatal

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objection, we are assured that the fault is in the mode of statement and not in the doctrine itself. The writer fears that he may have unwittingly betrayed some part of the interests which he has endeavoured to defend: if so, he trusts that his error will be pointed out, and the truth benefit by the labours of some abler champion.

In the present volume will be found an Index to the whole work.

S.J.H.

Stonyhurst,
January, 1896.

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ERRATUM.

An unfortunate mistake occurs on page 386 of the second volume. The doctrine taught by St. Thomas is there ascribed to Scotus, and St. Thomas is credited with the view originally held by Scotus, which has now become prevalent.

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OUTLINES OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY.

Treatise the Thirteenth.

Actual Grace.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT IS GRACE?

579. *Plan of the Treatise.*—We have already, in previous Treatises, had occasion to mention Grace, by which the reader will have understood an influence of God upon the soul of each man, helping him to do his duty and attain the end of his being. This vague, general account has hitherto been sufficient; but it is now time to enter more particularly into the matter, the right understanding of which is of the utmost importance, for the doctrine of Grace has direct bearing on the position of each rational creature with regard to his Creator. One man believes that he can attain his end and gain admission to Heaven by the use of his natural powers, and that he is under no necessity of being

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helped by God: another believes that not only is special Divine help necessary, if he is to be saved, but that this help is given to some individuals only of the human race, and that it is denied to others: a third believes that the help is absolutely necessary, but that it is offered to all men. No one can fail to see that the differences of belief which are here briefly indicated must profoundly affect the character and conduct of each man, and his view of life. In this Treatise, we propose to show why we reject the Pelagian view which denies the necessity of grace, and the Calvinistic view which represents grace as absolutely necessary indeed, but often unattainable; and why we hold that without this special aid, man would not merely fail to attain salvation, and in fact would yield to the temptations to evil which come in his way; but that no man is left without the assistance which is so necessary to him, to enable him to avoid evil and do good, and so reach Heaven.

We shall give a chapter to proving the necessity of grace, and another to the teachings of revelation as to the distribution of grace, while yet another will deal with the difficulty that is found in reconciling the action of grace with the freedom of man's will. Some preliminary matter will occupy us for the present.

580. *Subject of the Chapter.*—Grace is a word of very wide reach, and is used in various senses, both as denoting different things and also different aspects of the same thing. The chief work of the present chapter will be to explain these various senses, a clear apprehension of which will help us to avoid

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confusion hereafter; and we shall learn what is the proper sense of the word, which is to be understood if Grace be mentioned without a clear indication that it is used in some sense different from that which it properly bears.

581. *Authority of St. Augustine.*—In our Second Treatise, we spoke of the cases where a single witness suffices to prove what was the tradition of the Church in his time, and we mentioned especially the case of St. Augustine (n. 101), whose authority stands very high, but not so high as has sometimes been supposed. The controversies that have arisen concerning the weight to be ascribed to the teaching of this great Doctor chiefly touch on the matter of Grace; and it will be convenient if we now go a little more deeply into the matter than has hitherto been necessary.

No one who is even slightly acquainted with the history of the Church during the closing years of the fourth century and the opening of that which followed can fail to see how prominent a position was occupied by St. Augustine, especially in all that concerned the controversies with the Pelagians and the Semi-Pelagians. Although this Saint was Bishop of the subordinate see of Hippo, yet it was his presence in a Council that gave importance to its decrees, and his was the hand that drew up the letters by which its proceedings were made known to the world; if Aurelius of Carthage, in virtue of his position, was leader in the measures taken to defend Catholic truth, yet his suffragan, Augustine of Hippo, because of his learning and prudence,

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was the "mind" of the movement, as St. Prosper says. (*Carm. de Ingrat.* 92; *P.L.* 51, 102.) Nor was this high esteem for St. Augustine manifested only in the region where he was personally known; for St. Jerome, writing from Palestine, testifies that the African Doctor was regarded throughout the East as the "second founder" of the ancient faith (Epist. 141, *Ad Aug.* 1, 3; *P.L.* 44, 571), and a Synod of Bishops held in 415 at Diospolis in the same province, declared that to reject the writings of Augustine on the subject of Grace was equivalent to an avowal of heresy. (See Hefele, *Conciles*, ii. 284.) St. Jerome, in the letter just quoted, remarks that it was the glory of his correspondent to be hated by all the enemies of the truth. Nor was his reputation merely transient: St. Peter Damian, or some other writer of the eleventh century, terms St. Augustine the tongue of the Church (Serm. 62, *De S. Steph.*; *P.L.* 144, 857): the esteem in which he was held by the scholastics is proved by the practice of St. Thomas, who constantly appeals to his writings as of decisive authority, and we have already quoted the opinion of Suarez that it is "rash" to depart from any part of his teaching on Grace (nn. 101, 328, iv.): and this view is heartily accepted at the present day by all Catholic divines.

But St. Augustine is dead, and we know his doctrine only from his writings; which writings are not always easy to interpret. The case is the same with them as with the Holy Scripture itself: both contain things hard to be understood which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruc-

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tion (2 St. Peter iii. 16): and for five centuries past, a succession of heretics, Wycliff, Luther, Calvin, Baius, Jansenius, have professed to find in St. Augustine a basis for certain views as to the Divine will to save men and the distribution of grace which under pretence of exalting God really degrade both Him and that noble work of His hands, the race of man. These innovators profess themselves the devoted disciples of St. Augustine, but they are far from imitating their master in his absolute submission to the judgment of the Apostolic See. (See Epist. *Ad Bonif.* 1, 3; *P.L.* 44, 571.) The guidance of the Church, speaking by the living voice of the Roman Pontiff, is needed to secure us against error in our interpretation of St. Augustine; to hold otherwise is to suppose that the promise of Divine assistance in teaching was given to an individual Doctor of the Church, whereas in truth it is given to the Church at large. (St. Matt. xxviii. 20.)

582. *The Old Testament Use.*—Although *Grace* must be regarded as a technical term belonging to the New Testament dispensation, yet it may be interesting to consider some more or less equivalent terms used in the earlier books of Holy Scripture. The idea of condescension runs through all; they all indicate that one thing which is regarded as the higher comes down to a level with the lower, and this lowering is usually a spontaneous act. The Hebrew word which most nearly corresponds to the theological term, Grace, is employed of the evening sun hastening down to the horizon (Judges xix. 9), but more properly of favour shown by God to man

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(Eccles. ix. 11), or by one man to another. (Zach. iv. 7.) From this meaning it is easily transferred to that character of a person which secures him the favour of another, and the phrase "to find favour in the eyes" of a superior is of constant occurrence. (Genesis vi. 8, xviii. 3; 1 Mach. x. 60.) "Grace" is sometimes an alternative term for "beauty" (Psalm xliv. 3), or for "a good thing" (Prov. xviii. 22), especially an undeserved favour. (n. 604.) A kindred Hebrew word signifies "gratis," "without expecting wages" (Genesis xxix. 15), or "vainly," as when an enterprise does not succeed. (Prov. i. 17.) The same root gives us Anna, the name borne by the mothers of the Prophet Samuel and of the Blessed Virgin: and it is curious to find it also designating the Carthaginian general, Hannibal—"Baal favours me," being the not improbable interpretation of his name.

The idea of gratuitousness which is found in these passages of the Old Testament attaches to many uses of the word "grace" beyond the province of theology. Thus "gratitude" is the sense called up in a right-minded man by the feeling that he has received a benefit which he did nothing to earn, and "grace" after a meal is the expression of our thankfulness to the Giver of our food, and the same name is loosely applied to the act of "blessing" the food before taking it, which is properly the function of a priest, but which is suitably performed by every Christian. Canonists distinguish rescripts of right, which are granted by the Roman Pontiff in pursuance of the general law giving the applicant a right:

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and rescripts of grace, which are granted as a favour in particular circumstances. In English law, letters-patent for the protection of inventions are granted by the Sovereign "out of his especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion." No doubt these words have survived from a time when the grant of a patent was more or less a matter of personal favour, and was not, as now, a matter of course, whenever the applicant fulfils the conditions. The Canon Law regards with especial favour such grants as are described as made by the Pope of his mere motion and certain knowledge.

583. *Divisions of Grace.*—What we have already seen will suffice to show that the word Grace is used in a great variety of senses. With many of these we have nothing to do in the present work, for they belong to other branches of knowledge: but even if we confine ourselves to strictly theological matter, the word is employed to denote things the most diverse, and unless these distinctions are clearly understood, there is great danger of confusion: on the other hand, the full apprehension of these various meanings will go far to remove the difficulties of our subject: a large proportion of the controversies as to the necessity and effects of Grace are brought to an end when each party makes clear what he means by the word.

We shall explain the chief divisions under distinct heads.

I. *Uncreated. Created.*—That God communicates Himself to man is an act of condescension on the part of the Creator, to which the creature

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can have no right of his own: it is therefore a grace, and is called Uncreated Grace, to distinguish it from other forms of Grace, which are created. The Godhead communicates Himself to men, in so far as His Love is the source of all that we have; the Word of God, becoming Incarnate, merited for us all forms of Grace; the Holy Ghost dwells in the Just, after a particular manner (nn. 184, ii., 646); and the end for which man was created is to receive that communication of the Divinity which constitutes the happiness of Heaven, and is known as "seeing" God. The distinctions that follow are concerned with Created Grace.

II. *Grace of God* and *Grace of Christ.*—The Grace of Christ, as here used, has nothing to do with the grace received by Christ in His Human Nature. It means grace regarded as being given by God to man through the merits of Christ the Redeemer. In the actual state of the world, there is certainly no grace which is not the grace of Christ in this sense; and in the Scotist view, that the Divine Word would have taken human nature even if Adam had not sinned (n. 512), no grace ever was given except in view of His merits. But in the perhaps equally common view, that the decree of the Incarnation was subsequent to the foresight of the sin of man, the grace received by the Angels, and by our first parents was not merited by Christ, and therefore receives the distinctive name of the grace of God. This division between the grace of God and the grace of Christ does not point to any difference in the nature of the grace itself, nor in its

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effects, which would vary according to the subject receiving it, but solely to what is called its "meritorious cause."

III. *External. Internal.*—Whatever influences come upon a man that help him to the attainment of his end, but are external to his soul, are truly graces, although they differ essentially from the gracious action of God immediately affecting the soul, to which the name is most properly applied, and which is distinguished as Internal. The great external grace granted by God to man is the Incarnation, and all others are the fruits of this. Among them we may mention the preaching of the Gospel, for it is an external grace to be born in a Christian country, to be trained in childhood in habits of prayer and the observance of the commandments of God. Health and sickness, prosperity and adversity, and countless other varying circumstances come under the same description, so far as they admit of being used as helps in fulfilling the end for which each man was created. They are truly graces, but are totally different in kind and effect from internal grace, which is to be understood as intended whenever grace is spoken of without something in the context to show that external influence is included. Neglect of this distinction has introduced confusion into the controversy with the Pelagians.

IV. *Natural. Supernatural.*—If man were in the state of pure nature (n. 489), he could not attain the end proper to that state, unless he received help from God to enable him to do his duty and to keep that natural law which would be

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obligatory on him, for temptation would be too strong for him; and the help needed would be something more than Conservation. (n. 438.) This will be proved hereafter. (n. 598.) But we saw (n. 483) that man actually has an end altogether different from that which would have been proposed in the state of pure nature; this end is supernatural, and cannot be approached without the aid of an appropriate influence of grace, as will be seen when the next chapter is read. The graces suited to the two states are distinguished as natural and supernatural, which words have been already explained (nn. 480—482) and will form the subject of some further remarks in various places. Very little is known concerning natural grace, which never has been given to man; and when grace is mentioned, the supernatural influence must be understood.

V. *Gratuitous. Ingratiating.*—When speaking of Miracle in our first volume, we had occasion to mention (n. 235) that a certain class of graces have received the name of "gratuitously given" (*gratis data*). This name is tautological and not particularly expressive, for that which is not gratuitous is not grace in any sense, and the name helps in no way to indicate what is the nature of the graces which it is intended to exclude. These are such as, for want of a better word, we call ingratiating: the Latin name used by theologians (*gratum faciens*) denotes that they make a man pleasing to God, grateful to Him, if we understand *grateful* of that which gives pleasure, and not in its commoner sense, which is nearly the same as *thankful*.

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Grace which ingratiates is that by which the recipient is brought nearer to God, and thus is made more pleasing in His eyes: grace gratuitously given enables the recipient to do something which helps another to draw nearer to God; it does not necessarily work to the spiritual good of the recipient.

St. Paul enumerates nine varieties of graces gratuitously given (1 Cor. xii. 8—10); these are wisdom, knowledge, faith, which help the recipient to know what he ought to teach; healing, miracles, prophecy, and discerning of spirits, which give authority to his words, while tongues and interpretation enable him to make himself understood. The general scope of the passage is tolerably clear, but there are difficulties respecting details, as may be seen in the commentators. St. Thomas shows the "convenience" (n. 509) of the division. (1. 2. q. 111. a. 4.) It will be observed that the action of the human recipient of the grace gratuitously given is an external grace to him on whom the action is exerted; internal grace can come from God alone.

When grace is mentioned, we must understand the grace that ingratiates to be meant, unless the contrary is indicated.

VI. *Habitual. Actual.*—The effect of grace may be formally to give abiding perfection to the soul of the recipient, or it may be an isolated, transient, influence of God. The name of habitual grace is given to grace, considered as producing the first effect, from the analogy of those permanent

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qualities which are called habits: when considered as the result of distinct Divine acts it is called actual. In habitual grace we may distinguish sanctifying grace, which is a created refulgence of the uncreated essence of God, whereby our soul is raised to lasting likeness to God: the infused virtues which give to the powers of our soul an abiding fitness for doing acts that are supernaturally good: and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost (Isaias xi. 2), which perfect the faculties of the soul, fitting them to carry out all the suggestions of the Spirit of God with joy and completeness. All these matters will be dealt with more fully in our next Treatise, on Justification. (nn. 635, 636, 643—646.) At present we shall speak of actual grace.

VII. *Stirring. Helping.*—Nothing can be called in the full sense a human act, for which a man is morally responsible, except that which proceeds from his free-will, with knowledge and liberty. But the act commonly has beginnings which are not originated by the free-will nor under its control, and these first motions may go on for a while unperceived. As we shall see, no act is in any way helpful to our salvation unless it is done under the influence of supernatural grace (nn. 591, seq.), which must be with it throughout its course: but it is often necessary to distinguish grace as it attends the first motions and grace as it attends the completed voluntary act. The grace in both cases is one and the same: the difference is only in the matter on which it takes effect. (See St. Thomas, 1. 2. q. 111. a. 2. ad. 4.) Various pairs of words are

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used to denote the two actions of grace, and authors are not all in agreement as to the language that is most convenient. Sometimes the grace that attends the completed act is said to *co-operate* with the man, while that which attends the first motions *operates* alone. Grace that comes in the earlier stage is said to *stir*, as if its work were to waken one that sleeps; when he is awakened, and proceeds to act, grace will *help* him to perform his work. The one is called *preventing*, as preceding (*prævenio*) all action, the other is *subsequent*. A third member is spoken of by the Council of Trent, which describes grace as always preceding, accompanying, and following all good works. (Sess. 6, c. 16; Denz. 692.) In studying this matter there is peculiar need of care to make sure that we understand the sense in which the author before us uses his terms. (See n. 585.)

All these divisions are mentioned by the Fathers. St. Augustine (*De Grat. et Lib. Arbitr.* lib. 1, c. 17, n. 33; *P.L.* 44, 901) says expressly that God prepares the will of man, and by His co-operation perfects what by His operation He begins, for He who at the beginning operates in us that we have the will, in the completion of the act co-operates with our will. St. Fulgentius expresses the matter as follows: God gives grace to His unworthy creature who in virtue of His preventive mercy begins to will what is good, and by His subsequent mercy is enabled to do the good that he wills. The same Saint in another place represents grace as rousing the traveller who is sleeping on the road,

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accompanying him on his way and finally introducing him to the place for which he is bound.

It should be remembered that we are not here engaged in proving the doctrine which is implied, but in explaining the meaning of the terms which we shall have occasion to employ.

VIII. *Sufficient. Efficacious.*—One of the most famous controversies recorded in Church history is that which concerns the distinction between grace considered as sufficient to enable a man to do a supernaturally good act, and grace in virtue of which such an act is really done. Grace may be so given that nothing but the consent of the free-will is wanting to procure that the good act is done, and yet the will refuses to give the needful consent:—in this case the grace is said to be sufficient; if, however, the will gives the consent, and the act is done, the grace is called efficacious. More will be said on this distinction hereafter (nn. 585, 621); at present, it is enough to note that the name of efficacious is given by us to certain graces because of the event, and not because of any peculiarity in the nature of the graces offered.

IX. *Healing. Raising.*—When we spoke of the distinction of Natural and Supernatural Grace we pointed out that man could not, by his own powers, have attained his end, even if none but a natural end had been proposed to him: he would certainly fall away from this end by grievous sin, unless God gave him help beyond mere conservation and concurrence. The same is true of man in his

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actual state of elevated nature, which in this respect does not differ from the state of pure nature (n. 483); help is still needed to enable man to avoid mortal sin, as will be shown hereafter. (n. 598.) But this help does something more, for otherwise there would be no proportion between the naturally good act of resistance to temptation and the supernatural end which is in fact proposed to man. The grace therefore that heals the infirmity of our will, also confers upon our act a supernatural dignity, raising it so that there is a proportion between this act and the end towards which it is a step. The grace then that we receive, if looked on as having these two effects, is spoken of as healing and raising.

These two effects of healing and raising are not necessarily conjoined. The angels during their time of probation needed grace to raise their acts to a supernatural value, but they were not subject to concupiscence (n. 485) such as makes the healing effect necessary; and the same was true of our first parents before their fall. In the present order, there is nothing to prevent God, if such be His pleasure, from giving grace that shall heal but shall not elevate: whether He ever does so is a question which we shall touch upon when we speak of the distribution of grace. (n. 606.)

The grace usually spoken of in the course of this chapter, is created grace of Christ, internal, supernatural, ingratiating, actual. It may be regarded as stirring or helping, as sufficient or efficacious, as healing or raising; these three modes of distinguishing do not depend upon differences in the

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grace itself, but upon differences in the man who receives it.

584. *An Illustration.*—On account of the importance of having a correct notion of these divisions of grace and of the difficulty that is sometimes experienced in grasping their meaning, a familiar illustration may be useful. Grace is no less necessary for maintaining the spiritual life of the soul than is food for the living body: and distinctions may be made in regard of food analogous to those that have been occupying us when speaking of grace. The first and second distinctions have no place with regard to food, and any attempt to apply them would be a mere work of fancy, but the third distinction is applicable in some true sense. Food will not support our life while it remains external to us, but it must be taken within us, if it is to be profitable. It must be observed, however, that there is a serious fault in this analogy, for the food that is taken into us is the very same thing that was previously external, whereas internal grace is something different from the external influences, Christian education and the like, on occasion of which the internal effect is wrought by God.

The food of man corresponds to natural grace, for it does nothing to raise him to a state different from that in which it found him; but we may discover some analogy to supernatural grace, if we consider the effects of peculiar nourishment in other animals. Thus naturalists tell us that the grubs of the hive-bee when a few days old are supplied by their nurses with what is termed "bee-bread," and

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they grow up into either workers or drones: but when it is necessary to provide a queen, the nurses continue to provide the young insect with the peculiar food which was common to all in their earliest days, with the result that the whole structure of the creature is changed, and she is fitted for special functions, quite different from those fulfilled by the other classes of the community. It is perhaps no great stretch of fancy to see an analogy between this "royal jelly" and supernatural grace: the recipient of the one and the other is capable of doing acts which would have been absolutely impracticable without this nourishment.

Our fifth and sixth divisions scarcely admit of illustration such as we are engaged upon, without a degree of forcing which would not conduce to clearness; but coming to the seventh division we can say that food may be regarded as received into the stomach, as there undergoing digestion, and as finally poured into the blood; and these stages have some correspondence with grace considered as prevenient, concomitant, and subsequent. Whether food be "efficacious" or merely "sufficient," depends on the choice of the person to eat it or to leave it uneaten. We have seen that since the effects of the food of man are purely natural, we cannot regard it as being healing and elevating, for it does not elevate the recipient, unless any one like to apply the word to the effect produced on the young bee, of which we lately spoke.

585. *Intellect and Will.*—The faithful are taught to pray that God will enlighten their understanding

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and inflame their will. For instance, this double grace is expressly mentioned in the prayer *Aperi*, which is given in the Breviary, to be said by priests and others before beginning the recital of the Divine Office; and it is brought to the mind by the familiar prayer, "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our actions," and elsewhere, in many approved forms of devotion. The implied doctrine (n. 95) that both these elements of our nature, the intellect and the will, require the aid of grace in effect teaches that no action of man has any supernatural value unless it is wholly permeated with grace. This absolute necessity of grace will be fully proved in the next chapter; at present, we shall prove no more than that it is not confined to the intellect, nor to the will, but that, so far as it is needed at all, it must influence both these powers of the soul. The point finds place here as illustrating the nature of grace rather than its necessity.

The reader will remember what has been said (n. 583, vii.) as to the division of Actual Grace into Stirring and Helping. Stirring Grace is grace considered as giving a supernatural character to the first beginnings of a human act, while Helping Grace is that which affects the man when he perfects his act. It is perhaps hardly necessary to observe that in some true sense all grace is helpful, so that the meaning given to Helping Grace is to a certain extent arbitrary; in truth, grace helped to the initiation of the act and helped to its continuance, and yet the name of Helping Grace is confined to Grace in this last capacity.

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We said in the place just referred to, that a human act commonly begins with movements that are not under the control of the will, but by which an object is brought before the mind as having in it some element of desirability; and it is with these that Stirring Grace is concerned. Stirring Grace, therefore, is primarily grace of the intellect. Whenever a man becomes aware of the presence of the object, and considers whether he shall embrace it or not, both intellect and will are at work, and this is the time for the action of Helping Grace, which, therefore, is concerned with both powers; when consideration has led to knowledge, and the will by a final free and deliberate act accepts or rejects the object, the grace influencing it in this act, obviously, is not Grace of the Intellect, but of that faculty only the exercise of which makes man morally responsible. This account, it will be observed, applies alike to the case of a good or of a bad object. If the will finally accepts what is good, or rejects what is morally bad, the grace that has been given turns out to have been efficacious; if, on the other hand, the will rejects what is good, and embraces what is bad, the grace turns out to have been inefficacious; in both cases it was sufficient, for the will might have made it efficacious, had the person chosen, but as he perversely chose to render it inefficacious, it is merely called sufficient, for this is all that can be said of it. It is the more important to understand the sense in which we speak of "sufficient" grace, for the name has sometimes been used of a Divine influence

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which is described as being truly grace, but of such character that the recipient could not accomplish any salutary act by its aid, however anxious he might be to do so. Such influence is not truly "sufficient" grace, in any proper sense of the term, any more than a supply of sand is "sufficient" food.

It remains to set forth some of the passages of Scripture which point to the distinction between the grace of the intellect and the grace of the will: and the first point is made out if we show that, according to the doctrine of Scripture, no knowledge is profitable for salvation, unless the grace of God accompany it, and that the same is true of acts of the will. Thus, Christ confesses to, or praises, His Heavenly Father, that He has revealed to little ones the things which are hid from the wise and prudent (St. Matt. xi. 25); it was the Lord who opened the heart of Lydia to attend to those things which were said by Paul (Acts xvi. 14), and she was baptized; and Christians have an unction from the Holy One and know all things. (1 St. John ii. 21.) These texts make it plain that the external grace of hearing the Gospel preached needs to be accompanied by an internal influence, or the preaching will not have the desired effect. The need of grace to help and elevate the act of the will is implied in all the places where prayer is made that God would incline our hearts to Himself that we may walk in all His ways (3 Kings viii. 58), and that He would incline our hearts to His testimonies (Psalm cxviii. 36); while it is a favour when He takes away the stony heart out of our flesh and gives us a heart of

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flesh. (Ezech. xi. 19.) In these passages the heart is equivalent to the will.

586. *Actual Grace defined.*—It will be proper, before going further, to give the definition of Actual Grace usually adopted by theologians. Actual Grace is a supernatural influence of God upon our soul, which God imparts by way of transient action, in order that the soul may do an act tending towards our supernatural end. What has already been said will, it is hoped, have made this definition clear. The rest of the present Treatise may be regarded as development of it, and the next Treatise, on Justification, will illustrate the matter further, by showing what is to be said concerning the abiding Divine influence which is called Habitual Grace. (n. 583, vi.)

587. *Recapitulation.*—The main matter of this chapter has been the indication of the nature of that particular subdivision of Grace which is the subject of the present Treatise. Appeal to the authority of St. Augustine is so frequently found in the writings of those who have treated of Grace, that it seemed well to say something as to the weight to be given to his opinions; and an endeavour was made to help the reader to obtain a clear notion of what is meant by Grace, with which view some illustrations were brought forward and some incidental matter discussed.

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CHAPTER II.

NECESSITY OF GRACE.

588. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the present chapter, it will be our business to establish a fundamental point of Catholic doctrine, that fallen man can do nothing that will in any way help him to the attainment of his end unless throughout the act, from first to last, he enjoy that interior, supernatural, transient influence of God which is called Actual Grace. (n. 583.) This chapter therefore teaches what man is not capable of, in virtue of his own natural powers: in the following chapters we shall see to what things his capacity really extends, according to the teaching of the Church, and also what are the limits of this capacity. They who ascribe too much to man's natural powers are the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians, with whom many of the Arminians agree. These powers are unduly limited by the followers of Luther, Baius, and Jansenius. It will be remembered that these same names came before us in the same association when we were speaking of Predestination (n. 390) and of Original Sin (n. 478); and in truth the errors entertained by them on these subjects are closely akin to their views on grace, as we shall see.

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589. *The Pelagians.*—Pelagius did not deny in express terms the need that man has of grace, for the teaching of Scripture on the subject is too plain and he would have found no disciples. He was forced to admit the necessity of grace; but, using an artifice of which we have seen other examples, he covertly gave to the word a meaning of his own, different from the sense in which it is employed in Holy Scripture; and it was only when constrained by the arguments of his opponents that he disclosed his true mind. The grace of which he spoke was no interior grace affecting the will, but he gave the name of grace to the nature which man has received from His Creator, in virtue of which man is the master of his actions. Sometimes he explained grace to be the remission of sin, or the exterior grace of the preaching and example of Christ; at other times he represented it as (n. 692) our adoption to be sons of God, which is one of the effects of Baptism, or as being our destiny to eternal life; or again he came nearer to the truth and described it as an interior illumination of the intellect, rendering it more easy for the will to embrace good. All the favours here enumerated are free gifts of God, and therefore may be called graces in a wide sense (n. 583), but they are not actual grace in the sense which we have explained, and in which sense we shall prove it to be necessary. We have seen that it is supernatural and interior, and that it immediately affects both intellect and will. (n. 585.)

There are probably many persons at the present

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day, who being outside the Catholic Church, talk much about grace, but who would be found to mean no more than was meant by Pelagius, if only they would explain themselves fully. Catholics may still repeat what St. Jerome said fifteen hundred years ago, that it is a victory for the Church when her opponents explain clearly what they hold. (*Epist. ad Ctesiph.* n. 12; *P.L.* 22, 1159.)

590. *The Semi-Pelagians.*—We have had occasion to mention the Semi-Pelagians, and their leader, the celebrated ascetic writer Cassian. (n. 390.) Other champions of the same error came forth from the monastery of Lerins, of whom the best known is Faustus. It is thought by some that Vincent, the author of the *Commonitorium* (n. 114), was not altogether free from a certain tendency towards the false view, and the great St. Augustine himself was at one time mistaken. (*De Prædestin. SS.* c. 3, n. 7; *P.L.* 44, 964.) In both cases the error was excusable, for the matter had not been defined by the Church, nor ever had it become the subject of much discussion among theologians; and the name of Vincent finds a place in the Roman Martyrology (May 24) no less than that of Augustine. (August 28.)

The Semi-Pelagians did not deny the necessity of interior supernatural grace of the will, to enable a man to work out his salvation; their error therefore was not so grave as that of the more immediate followers of Pelagius. But they were wrong in maintaining that man, even unaided, was capable of making a beginning of the work, the continuation and completion of which essentially

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required the help of grace: they taught that free-will sufficed for the first step, and that by taking this first step the man earned the grace which was needed for his further progress. St. Augustine, as we have said, at one time held this doctrine, but he was convinced of his error by letters from St. Hilary of Arles (inter Epist. S. Aug. 226, al 256; *P.L.* 33, 1007—1012) and St. Prosper (*P.L.* 51, 67—74); while his two tracts on the Predestination of the Saints and on the Gift of Perseverance, containing his matured views, are a full vindication of the doctrine of the Church, and establish that man can do nothing towards his salvation unless the aid of the free grace of God is with him from first to last.

In our Treatise on the Blessed Trinity we spoke of the Semi-Arians. (n. 400.) It may save confusion if we remark that the prefix has a different force in that case from the one with which we are concerned in the present paragraph. The Arians denied the Divinity of the Son of God, which the Council of Nicaea asserted, using the word Consubstantial to express the truth: the Semi-Arians were they who professed their acceptance of the doctrine of Nicaea, but desired the adoption of some other phrase: their objection was to the word, not to the thing. On the other hand, the Pelagians and the Semi-Pelagians alike differed from the Catholics in regard to a substantial part of the doctrine, and not merely as to its expression; they agreed in starting with the principle that man could begin the work of his salvation without grace, but they

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parted company on the question whether he were capable of completing the work, which the Pelagians asserted and the Semi-Pelagians denied.

591. *The Catholic Doctrine.*—The doctrine of the Church on the absolute need of grace, to enable man to begin to work out his end, is found in many decrees of Councils and Papal pronouncements, beginning early in the fifth century. We shall be content to quote two canons of the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent, which put the substance of the doctrine shortly and clearly. (Denz. 694, 695.)

2. If any one say that Divine grace is given through Christ Jesus only to enable man to live justly and earn eternal life, as if by the power of his free-will he could without grace do both these things, although scarcely and with difficulty, let him be anathema. (n. 494.)

3. If any one say that without the previous inspiration and aid of the Holy Spirit, man can believe, hope, love, and repent as he ought, let him be anathema.

It will be observed that the former of these two canons is directed against the Pelagian heresy; the second is pointed at the Semi-Pelagians. The phrase "as he ought" is important. It is the duty of every man to attain his end, or this is what he "ought" to do: what therefore does not promote his end is not what he "ought" to do, even though it be in itself blameless. The doctrine of the canon is therefore quite consistent with what we shall show hereafter (n. 600), that works done by man without grace are not necessarily sins.

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The doctrine here stated, which we shall prove immediately, must be taken in connection with what will be said in a future chapter, on the Distribution of Grace.

592. *The Beginnings of Faith.*—First, we shall establish, in opposition to the Semi-Pelagians, that grace is needed for the beginnings of faith, and even for that pious affection towards believing, which is the first condition of saving faith. The proof must necessarily be taken from the records of revelation, for the matter depends wholly upon the supernatural destiny of man, and this cannot be known by natural reason. The work of St. Augustine on Predestination collects and arranges the passages in which our doctrine is taught by the Scripture. We will give some of these, taken from the Epistles of St. Paul.

The Apostle instructs the Corinthians (2 Cor. iii. 5) that we are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God: and this insufficiency must extend to the beginnings of faith, which is certainly a kind of thinking; and there is nothing in the context to cut down the words of the text, further than that we need not understand it as extending beyond such thinking as tends to salvation; but even so, it certainly embraces the act of faith.

Again: we have nothing that we have not received, and it is God who distinguishes those that have faith from such as have it not. (1 Cor. iv. 7.) Faith, therefore, and even the beginnings of faith, are worked in us, and yet come not from us but from

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God, under whose stirring the man puts forth his vital activity.

If the grace of faith were given as reward of natural merit, then this grace would no longer deserve to be called grace, for it would lack that gratuitous character which is essential to grace. (Romans xi. 6.)

Lastly, the doctrine is implied in the petitions which Christians are accustomed to make, when they ask God to grant faith to them that believe not, and to believers an increase of faith. "Grant us what Thou demandest of us, and demand what Thou wilt," is an accepted form of prayer, which has passed from the works of St. Augustine (*De Prædestin.* 11, 12; *P.L.* 44, 977) into ordinary use.

It is objected to this doctrine that persons who are obstinate in formal heresy have no grace helping them to make an act of faith, and yet they may believe certain revealed truths; as if, for instance, one believes in the Divinity of our Lord, but refuses to believe the Supremacy and Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff, although these doctrines are proposed to him in such manner that he sees that he cannot prudently refuse his belief. Also it is said that no supernatural help is needed to enable a man to believe a truth which is proposed to him on grounds that are evidently credible; and that, often, a truth is believed as being part of the Christian revelation which in reality is opposed to revelation, and in this case there is no room for the action of grace. The answer to all these difficulties is the same: the belief of which we speak is not the mere

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material acceptance of a truth, but it is the acceptance of the truth in the manner in which it "ought" to be accepted, in order to be helpful to salvation, provided other conditions are fulfilled. (n. 591.)

It is also objected that God demands nothing of us but that which we can give to Him, for it would be unjust to claim what is beyond our power; and that therefore faith is in our power, for certainly God calls on us to believe. The reply has been anticipated. God's grace will certainly be with us so far as is needed to enable us to do what is required; or at least it lies with the objector to show the existence of cases to the contrary, and this he will never be able to do. (See n. 694.)

593. *Good Works.*—We proceed to show that no work tending to the salvation of man can be performed without the grace of God. The teaching of Scripture is plain. No man can come to Christ except the Father draw him (St. John vi. 44); without Christ we can do nothing (St. John xv. 5); and the same teaching is involved in the whole of the discourse which is recorded in the fifteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, concerning the vine and its branches. The branch that is severed from the vine is incapable of bearing fruit, with an incapacity that is absolute; the assistance that it receives from the vine is interior. The instruction given by Christ is therefore altogether opposed to the views put forward by Pelagius (n. 589), who thought that an exterior influence was sufficient, and that even this was not further needed than to render good works more easy. Christ does not say

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that the severed branch, under the exterior influence of the sun, may bring forth fruit, although with difficulty: He says, as we all know, that the branch cannot bear fruit unless it abide in the vine, but that if severed it shall be cast forth, and shall wither, and shall be cast into the fire and burn. In the same spirit, St. Paul teaches the Philippians that God begins a good work in them, and will perfect it (Philipp. i. 6), and that it is He who worketh in them both to will and to accomplish. (Philipp. ii. 13.)

Such is the testimony of Scripture, and the tradition of the Church was sufficiently manifested by the condemnation universally passed upon the Pelagian error as soon as its nature was understood. The need of grace to strengthen the will follows from what the experience of every man teaches him as to the strong allurements of lower goods, drawing us away from the higher good: this concupiscence (n. 485) is the law which St. Paul saw in his members, fighting against the law of his mind and captivating him in the law of sin that was in his members (Romans vii. 23); but perhaps the certainty of failure in unaided warfare against this domestic foe is a merely moral certainty, and not absolute. A stronger theological argument is found in the multitude of passages in which we are taught the absolute necessity of prayer, if we would serve God. These passages are well known, and they will be found on examination to imply, as we have said, that the necessity is absolute. We ought always to pray and not to faint (St. Luke xviii. 1),

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and this is enforced by the example of a widow who would certainly not have secured the assistance of the judge to whom she appealed, had she not been troublesome by her importunity. We are to knock, and it shall be opened to us (St. Luke xi. 9); but the door is not opened until a knock is heard. We are bidden to pray without ceasing (1 Thess. v. 17; see n. 608), and citations to the same effect may easily be multiplied. The sense of the Church on the need of interior grace, not confined to the intellect alone, is shown by the prayer which she uses in the Mass, asking God to compel even our rebellious wills to come to Him. (Secret for the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, and elsewhere.)

594. *Objections.*—The objections brought by both sections of heretics against the doctrine of the Church were partly drawn from Scripture, where good works are often represented as being done by men, as in the case of the good thief, whose courageous avowal of the innocence of Christ and of his own guilt won for him the grace of contrition (St. Luke xxiii. 39—43); and St. Paul attributes his own conversion to the good faith with which he acted when he was a chief persecutor. (1 Timothy i. 13.) But these instances are useless unless it be shown that the grace of God was not with the thief or the persecutor from the beginning of their turning to better things, and continuously to the end. This negative can never be shown, and we are entitled to call for the proof, because otherwise the words of our Lord would have been falsified: man would have shown himself capable of doing something

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without Christ. (n. 592.) It is obvious, in fact, that objections of this sort are valueless except on an assumption that grace is given only to those who have faith, which is false, as we shall see. (n. 614.)

A passage in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans (ii. 14) is often pressed into the service of the Pelagians. It speaks of the Gentiles, who have not the law, doing by nature those things that are of the law, and the argument shows plainly that the Apostle looks upon the things so done as being helpful to salvation: from this it is concluded that salutary acts can be done by nature, and that grace is not needed. The whole force of this conclusion, it is obvious, depends on the meaning to be given to the word "nature:" if "nature" is here opposed to "grace," the Pelagians are justified in their use of the passage. But it is not so: Gentiles are, of course, opposed to Jews, and their state is spoken of as "nature" to distinguish them from those men who were under the law of Moses, which added much to the "natural" law; this "natural" law is spoken of as written in the hearts of the Gentiles (Romans ii. 15), and its distinction from the Mosaic law is set forth more fully in another place (2 Cor. iii. 3), where it is said to be found not in tables of stone (Exodus xxiv. 12; 3 Kings viii. 9), but in the fleshly tables of the heart. The verse quoted makes no reference to the presence or absence of grace, "anticipating" and "accompanying" the works spoken of, and it merely distinguishes between what a Jew did in pursuance of a revealed law, and what was done by Gentiles to whom no such revelation

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had been granted. The interpretation which we give to this text cannot be fully justified without an elaborate analysis of the Epistle from which it is taken; but no other meaning seems to be in harmony with the general purpose of the Apostle, which is to check a tendency of the Jewish community whom he was addressing (iv. 1; vii. 1, &c.), to exaggerate the importance of the Mosaic law. He insists that the salvation brought by Christ is attainable by all men, Jews or Gentile, provided only each does his duty, observing that law which it has pleased God to propose to him. (See n. 632.)

Certain passages are found in some of the earlier Fathers which admit of being represented as conveying Semi-Pelagian doctrine: St. Justin, St. Irenæus, and Clement of Alexandria have been quoted as writing to this effect, and also St. Chrysostom, whose date was later. We need not delay to discuss their words, or to show that they admit, even if they do not require, a Catholic explanation. We have already had occasion to remark on the freedom of language which is found in writers who had not been taught by experience the necessity of cautious accuracy. (nn. 420, 498.)

Objections drawn from Scripture and Tradition have probably less weight at the present day than those which Reason is supposed to supply; so these shall be now considered. It is said that to set up the necessity of grace is to destroy free-will; but whatever difficulty may be found in explaining this matter applies equally to the reconciliation of free-will with the Divine foreknowledge (n. 381), and

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with the need of Divine concurrence in our actions (n. 438), and so it need not be again discussed. The doctrine has been thought to be inconsistent with the received axiom that one who does what he can will be aided by God; but it leads to no inconsistency. In doing what he can, man has the preventing or stirring grace of God (n. 583, vii.), and the help of grace continues to aid him throughout. It seems unjust that grace should be given to one man and yet denied to another; such conduct makes God a respecter of persons. (Acts x. 34.) But this is not true; there is no injustice in withholding from one what is granted to another when, as in the matter before us, neither has any right; and the difficulty, such as it is, proves to be merely a phase of the mystery of the permission of evil, with which we have already dealt. (n. 388.)

595. *Grace of the Just.*—We have seen (n. 591) that the doctrine of the absolute necessity of actual grace for all salutary acts is part of the defined faith of the Church, on which all Catholics are agreed; but there is a kindred point which is still open to discussion, and which we will briefly notice, for the sake of the light it throws on the whole subject. We saw (n. 538, vi.) that besides the transient influence called actual grace, God also communicates Himself to the soul by way of an abiding habit, which is called habitual grace, along with which go certain infused habits and gifts; the possession of habitual grace renders the man just (n. 184, ii.), and the act of God by which it is communicated has the name of justification. All

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this is dealt with in our next Treatise. The question now before us is whether a just man can do salutary acts in virtue of the habitual grace that he has, and without the aid of actual grace. As to this, it is certain that habitual grace cannot be retained for long without the special aid of God, as we shall see presently. (n. 598.) It will be lost by mortal sin. Also it is certain that the healing effect of grace (n. 583, ix.) is needful to the just as well as to those who are without habitual grace, for the possession of this grace does not remove concupiscence. (n. 485.) Further too, it is certain that the just man needs actual grace, if he is to elicit acts of virtue of greater intensity than corresponds to the habits which he actually has, for such acts would have no supernatural principle to give origin to this intensity. The question therefore is, whether any supernatural value attaches to an act done by a just man, without the aid of actual grace, but of an intensity within the measure of the infused habits which are in his soul? The negative answer must be given, in accordance with the almost universal opinion of theologians; but, as we have said, the point is not absolutely defined. Those who have held that the presence of habitual grace, of itself, suffices to give supernatural value to acts done by the just man, think that actual grace is needless under the circumstances, for the habit is a supernatural principle, and that which springs from it is supernatural. But it is replied that the monuments of revelation seem to require actual grace in all cases, and make no exception for the just; and the mere union of the

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branch with the vine will not suffice to secure the production of fruit, unless constant supplies of sap make their way from the stem to the furthest twigs. If revelation teaches that something is needed, we must not reject it, or explain it away, merely because we do not see the intrinsic ground of the need.

This may be enough to say on a long controversy. It will be observed that it does not touch any question as to the distribution of grace, for even those who denied that actual grace was needful, might consistently maintain that it is always given. In this and other such questions of the schools, it is worth while to notice how large is the amount of doctrine that is common to both sides. The unity of faith is seen most clearly when we study one of these controversies, and consider how much there is on which we all agree, and that there is a living man, the Roman Pontiff, whose decision, should he see fit to speak, would be accepted with absolute interior submission by all; for the fact of his speaking would prove conclusively that the Church had received a revelation, which is declared by his mouth.

596. *Sin.*—So far we have been speaking of matters where the incapacity of the unaided will of man is absolute: matters which are supernatural, or above nature, towards which therefore no created nature can make the smallest approach, unless it is raised, as it were, to a higher platform by the aid of elevating grace. (nn. 481, 583, ix.) We have now to consider some other matters where the incapacity of the unaided will is as true as in those already

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considered, but where it is not absolute in the same sense, for certain more or less successful approaches can be made, even without the aid of grace, although the full accomplishment is hopeless. There is now no need that the will should be raised to a higher platform, but the work would require that while it remains on the lower platform, it should put forth an energy beyond its powers. The healing effect of grace is needed, but not its elevating virtue.

Before entering on this matter, it will be convenient to borrow from Moral Theology some distinctions concerning varieties of sin. We shall merely explain the meaning of terms, and state certain points of doctrine connected with them, without going into proofs and minute discussion.

Sin is an offence against God, or it is a thought, work, or deed contrary to the law of God. Sin is distinguished as actual or habitual: actual sin is an act accomplished in an instant; habitual sin is the permanent state that results from certain acts of actual sin. The use of the words "actual" and "habitual" is just the same as when the epithets are applied to grace. (n. 583, vi.) Habitual sin is also spoken of in a totally different sense, to express a long-continued series of actual sins of a particular character. The sin of Adam (n. 492) was an actual sin; in consequence of this sin, all men now come into existence without the robe of habitual grace, which would otherwise have been theirs. (n. 492.) They are therefore in a state of privation as a consequence of actual sin, or they are in that habitual sin which is called Original Sin. (n. 493.)

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Some men remain till death in the state of original sin in which they were conceived and born; others, through God's mercy, receive the gift of habitual grace, or are justified, through the Sacrament of Baptism which they receive with proper conditions, either actually or equivalently. (n. 693—695.) This may not take place until they have reached years of discretion; or they may be baptized in their infancy, as is regularly the case with the children of Christian parents. The change may be made in the soul of a child who is yet in the womb, as was the case with the Prophet Jeremias and St. John Baptist. (n. 547.) It is the unique privilege of the Immaculate Virgin to have received habitual grace in the first instant of her existence. (n. 557.)

A person who has once received the gift of habitual grace cannot lose it unless he commits grievous actual sin, the nature of which will be explained directly. It is the proper work of the Sacrament of Penance, when received either actually or equivalently and with due dispositions, to restore habitual grace to one who after being baptized has sinned grievously. (n. 744.)

The eternal condition of each man after death depends essentially upon the question whether, at the instant when his probation came to an end by the separation of his soul from his body, he was or was not clothed with habitual grace; the presence or absence of this gift determines whether he is one of those whom the Gospel represents as "sheep" (St. Matt. xxv. 32), or whether his portion is with the "goats." The differences that exist among

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the individuals in each of these classes are insignificant compared with the wide distinction between the two.

This doctrine, the several points of which will be proved in their proper places, shows how important it is to have a right understanding of the nature of actual sin. The common nature of all sin is that it is a breach of a command laid upon us by God, or by men to whom God has imparted a share of His authority. It is, therefore, an act, which may be purely internal, consummated in the will, and not proceeding further, as when one desires a forbidden object, or dwells on the thought of it, or rejoices interiorly at having sinned; or the act, originated in the will, may go on to something external, in word or deed. No act will be a sin unless it be a human act, proceeding from a man in virtue of those powers that make him a man: his understanding and his will; there must be knowledge of what he is about, and freedom in exercise of his choice, and if either of these elements is wholly wanting, the act cannot be called human: it is the act of a man, but of one who does not perform it as a man. This knowledge and freedom make up what is called deliberation, and if there is no deliberation there is no sin.

What has been said so far applies to all sin; but sins fall into two classes, the distinction between which is of the utmost importance. It is not all sin that drives habitual grace from the soul. This effect is not found in certain sins in which the unlawful object sought is of less weight, and where

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there is nothing in the purpose with which the act is done, or the circumstances attending it, to add great malice to that contained in the object itself. When the object of the act, its end, or its circumstances involve grave malice, the matter of the sin is said to be grave; and if a gravely unlawful act is done with full deliberation, there is a sin of the highest order, which is called grave, grievous, or mortal; this last epithet expresses the characteristic effect of grievous sin, in that it deprives the soul of habitual grace and spiritual life. If an unlawful act be such that its matter is in no way grave, or if it be done without full deliberation, through ignorance or surprise, then there is a sin that is light, or venial; the word venial means pardonable, and indicates that the all-just and all-holy God does not see in it such depravity as deserves to be punished by eternal torment.

Whether an unlawful act of a man be sin, and if so whether it be mortal or venial, is known with certainty by God, to whose eyes the whole matter is clear; man can only form a more or less confident judgment in the matter, and often even the person who has done the act must remain in doubt. Theologians endeavour to classify the matter of sin, as being grievous or not grievous, and there is general agreement among them as to most points, though other cases are in controversy; but they deal with the matter only of the sin, and they feel themselves unable to explain what degree of deliberation is necessary to constitute the sin as a fully human act, or to say how far its guilt is diminished

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by want of knowledge of the nature of the act, or want of freedom in the will that embraces it.

There are systems of doctrine which represent all sins as equal, and in which, therefore, the distinction of mortal and venial finds no place. Sometimes the meaning is that all acts of fallen man are sins unless they are elevated by grace to the supernatural order, a tenet which will come before us presently. (n. 600.) At other times, attention is fixed on the violation of binding law which is found in all sins alike, and no account is made of the other elements that enter into the act. The upholders of this view ought to hold that a trifling loss of temper in a child is as blameworthy as murderous violence in a man; no distinction can be made except on principles which are substantially what we have set forth; the child's act has light matter and is not fully deliberate, and is, therefore, not a grievous sin, but the act of the man seems to have all that is requisite to constitute grave malice. Our doctrine as to the distinction of sins must be taken along with the teaching of the Gospel, that some men are punished eternally by a God who is merciful as well as just. When we speak of a sin as venial, we mean that it is not such as to deserve this terrible chastisement. The charge is sometimes made that Catholic divines who speak of venial sin encourage laxity of life and conduct; but this will not be said by any one who realizes what is involved in grievous sin.

597. *Sinlessness.*—We now come to consider a further point of Pelagian doctrine, which, like the rest, exaggerates the capacity of man's unassisted

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will, and makes too little of the need of grace. The matter is dealt with by several synods which were held in the earlier years of the fifth century, and it was deemed right to enforce their decisions at the Council of Trent, perhaps in order that the Acts of this great assembly might contain, as far as possible, a complete account of the doctrine of the Church on grace and justification. The Tridentine Canon runs as follows: If any one say that a man who is once justified can throughout his life avoid all sin, including even venial sin, except by a special privilege of God, such as the Church holds to have been granted to the Blessed Virgin, let him be anathema. (Sess. 6. can. 23; Denz. 715.)

The Council declares that even those men who are in the grace of God, unless they have received a special privilege, cannot hope to go through life without falling into some sin. If this be so, it does not need proof that one who is destitute of the robe of grace cannot live a sinless life.

The decree does not lay down any general law that no man can hope to escape mortal sin; in fact, we shall see in the next section (n. 598) that the ordinary grace of God suffices to enable every just man to resist temptation to what is grievously evil; but it is declared that at least venial sin is unavoidable. It will be remembered (n. 596) that sin is venial, either because the unlawful object is not of grievous weight or because there is not sufficient deliberation to lead to the full measure of guilt. It is held by many that the ordinary aid of grace suffices to save a just man from the commission of

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fully deliberate venial sins, which escape being mortal only through the lightness of the matter; but the Council teaches us that in the course of a lifetime there always will be occasions when sin is committed with at least some, however imperfect, knowledge or with imperfect liberty. In these cases the deliberation may be so small that the sins are sometimes called indeliberate; but this phrase must not be misunderstood; in strictness it involves a contradiction, for if there be absolutely no deliberation, there is no sin at all. It would be better to apply the term "half deliberate" to sins wherein the deliberation is very small, and so we may say that no man who enjoys only the ordinary help of grace will live long without committing some sin, even if it be only half deliberate. We may trust that many men pass long periods of time unstained by even a single fully deliberate sin.

The incapacity to avoid sin, which we assert, is moral only, not physical. It is not that the will *cannot* refuse its assent to each sinful object that is presented to it, but that in point of fact it *will* not do so throughout the whole of an ordinary life. That which the will has no physical capacity to avoid cannot be sin.

The proof of our doctrine from Scripture is not difficult. There is no man that sinneth not (2 Paral. vi. 36); there is no just man upon earth that doth good and sinneth not (Eccles. vii. 21); in the sight of God, no man living shall be justified. (Psalm cxlii. 2.) These texts are taken from the Old Testament, but the New Testament is in perfect accord: In many

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things we all offend (St. James iii. 2); if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us (1 St. John i. 8); all men are taught to pray, Forgive us our sins. (St. Luke xi. 4.)

We have already seen that there may be exceptions to the general rule, for we have established the absolute sinlessness of our Blessed Lady (n. 563); and certainly no shadow of reason is forthcoming in favour of putting a restriction on the omnipotence of God in the bestowal of favours. Nothing is known as to how far this favour has been extended. Perhaps it was enjoyed by the Apostles, after the coming of the Holy Ghost and the commencement of their ministry; perhaps, also, by St. Joseph, after his union with his Virgin Spouse. Some believe that St. John Baptist was free from every venial sin throughout his life, and the hymn sung on his feast lends countenance to this view; but Suarez (*De Myst. Disp.* 24, sec. 4, 3), arguing from St. Augustine (*Contra Julian.* 5, 8; *P.L.* 44, 805), holds the contrary.

598. *Grievous Temptations.*—We have now to consider another incapacity of the unassisted will of man, which like the last is merely moral, not physical. This is the incapacity to resist the urgent temptations to grievous sin which each man meets with from time to time. By temptation is to be understood every influence which tends to lead the will to consent to sin, and this influence may come from the allurements of exterior objects, from the cravings of the man's own lower nature, or from the direct solicitations of Satan or his ministers

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(n. 454), so that we have the familiar enumeration of our spiritual enemies, the world, the flesh (n. 485), and the devil. (1 St. Peter v. 8; Ephes. vi. 12; 1 St. John ii. 16, &c.) The urgency of the temptation may be greater or less, and the evil to which it inclines us may be grave or light (n. 596), but in ordinary circumstances and unless protected by God, no man would go long without being assailed by urgent temptation to grievous sin. When this often happens, we are warned in Scripture that a fall into sin is sure to occur sooner or later, unless the soul have the assistance of helping grace. (n. 583, ix.) As pointed out in the place just referred to, the grace need not necessarily also raise the act of resistance so as to give it a supernatural value; but the strengthening of the will is necessary, if grave sin is to be avoided, unless the Divine aid come by way of shielding from assault. If this be done, there is a merely external grace (n. 583, iii.), and no supernatural act is possible; and, in fact, no act of rejection of temptation is performed, for the temptation is never felt.

The need of Divine help, if temptation is to be resisted, is taught by all the passages of Scripture in which we are urged to pray for such help; whether we are taught to ask for the negative grace that we be not led into temptation (St. Matt. vi. 13; St. Luke xxii. 40), or are assured that God will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able, but will make also with temptation issue, that we may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. x. 13.) It is through the grace of God by Jesus Christ that

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St. Paul trusts to be delivered from the law in his members, or concupiscence (Romans vii. 23—25); and the angel of Satan who buffeted him did not depart, as he had asked; but he was assured that the grace of God was sufficient for him. (2 Cor. xii. 7—9.)

The Holiness of God, and the assurance given us through St. Paul, in the passage just quoted, that we shall never be tempted above our strength, show that the needful Divine help will never be wanting. Whenever sin is committed, the fault is in the sinner, who might have resisted the temptation had he chosen.

It will be readily understood that very little is known as to what would have been the precise character of that state of pure nature, which is possible but has never been actual. Nevertheless, one point seems clear. In that state, men would be exposed to temptation from the three enemies, just as they are now, for the state of Repaired Nature (n. 483) in which we actually are, does not differ from the state of Pure Nature in itself, but only in the circumstances to which its existence is due. (n. 500.) It follows that even in the state of Pure Nature, men would have needed some Divine help to make it morally possible for them to resist temptation; and the supply of this help, as occasion required, would have been part of the course of God's natural providence over His creature. This help goes by the name of Natural Grace, or more commonly, Natural Remedy. (n. 583, iv.)

The doctrine of this paragraph on the need of

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grace to make it morally possible to resist grievous temptation is not expressly defined by the Church, but it is a certain theological conclusion, the denial of which would be at least rash. (n. 328, iv.)

599. *Perseverance.*—By perseverance is meant an unwavering fixity of the will, and the word is used in Theology to signify the fixed will of a just man to retain the robe of grace with which he is clothed, and not to cast it from him by committing grievous sin. The habit of this will constitutes the virtue of perseverance, a virtue which will show itself in a series, longer or shorter, of acts of resistance to temptation: this series being known as Active Perseverance. Passive Perseverance, not a very apt phrase, is employed to denote death in the state of grace; and Final Perseverance is the great gift enjoyed by those who have actively persevered till death come to them and they can be said to have had Passive Perseverance. There may be Passive Perseverance without Active, as when an infant dies after Baptism, or an adult the instant after his soul has received the grace of God; but we shall be chiefly concerned with the normal case, where death comes after the lapse of a certain period of well-doing.

It is the defined doctrine of the Church that Perseverance is impossible for a just man without special aid from God, but that with this aid it is possible. This is declared by the Council of Trent. (Sess. 6, can. 12; Denz. 689.) The point had been already laid down in the Councils which dealt with the Semi-Pelagian heresy. It is to be

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observed that the special aid spoken of does not belong to the extraordinary providence; it is ordinary, though supernatural, whereas the privilege of absolute sinlessness is extraordinary. (n. 597.) This aid is something different from the Divine Conservation and Concurrence, which maintain the man in his natural state of existence (n. 438); and it adds something to the habitual grace which constitutes the man just. This something is the series of actual graces without which active perseverance would have been impossible (n. 598), but which have been offered and have been efficaciously used as each occasion arose until the instant of death. This Final Perseverance deserves to be called by the Council (Sess. 6, can. 16; Denz. 708) a "great gift," for it involves the wholly gratuitous favours of existence as a free being, elevation to the supernatural state, habitual grace, and a series of actual graces; together with that crowning mercy which we see when the Master of Life and Death puts an end to the probation of the man at a moment when he is in the state of readiness to meet his Judge. The Roman historian describes his kinsman as being happy that his death was opportune (Tacitus, *Agric.* c. 45), for it came in time to save him from seeing the miseries that followed. In the same way, death comes timely to every man whom it finds in the state of grace: it is a great and unearned gift, whether it come at the end of a long course of active perseverance, or whether it follow promptly upon the attainment of justification.

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What we have said as to Perseverance is little more than a corollary from our doctrine respecting grievous temptation. It is illustrated, rather than proved by such passages of Scripture as the words of Christ: "He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved" (St. Matt. xxiv. 13), and by the warning as to the need of incessant vigilance: "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching" (St. Luke xii. 37); in the fourth chapter of the Book of Wisdom we read the description of the blessedness of those to whom the great gift comes early, so that the occasion of Active Perseverance has been wanting to them: these are they who are taken away lest wickedness should alter their understanding; their soul pleased God, therefore He hastened to bring them out of the midst of iniquities. (vv. 7—15.)

Apart from the peculiar and rare privilege of a special revelation, no man can know that he is one of those for whom the great gift of Final Perseverance is reserved. We shall see hereafter (n. 639) that no one can feel certain with full certainty that he is in the state of grace, unless God grant him the peculiar favour of a revelation; much less can he have absolute assurance as to the future—a truth which is often illustrated from the words that the fool is changed like the moon. (Ecclus. xxvii. 12.) When the Sacraments are worthily received, we have the assurance of a Divine promise that they work their appropriate effect of giving grace to the soul (n. 668); but there are no works of piety to which God has annexed the gift of Final Persever-

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ance. Prayer is an infallible means of grace, and whatever spiritual favours are needed will always be obtained by him that prays; but the effect of prayer is always conditional on the consistent conduct of the petitioner; and he that on one day prays for the gift of Final Perseverance must be considered to revoke this prayer, if he sin grievously upon the following day. The closing petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," is in fact a prayer for Final Perseverance, as St. Augustine observes (*De Dono Persev.* c. 17, n. 46; *P.L.* 45, 1021), and it may be used by all men at all times.

Speculations on the subject which we have been considering are closely akin to those that touch the mystery of Predestination. (n. 389.) These matters should be considered along with what will be said on the Distribution of Grace (nn. 611—614), and it will be found possible to obtain a grasp of a few clear principles, which will serve as clue to and guide through perplexing mazes.

It is sometimes said of a saint that he was confirmed in grace, and it is commonly believed that not the Blessed Virgin alone, but also the Apostles received this favour; nor need we suppose that it is confined to these special companions of our Lord on earth. This favour consists in a Divine decree always to give to a just man a degree of grace so potent that it will in fact be used by him, and so be efficacious in preserving him from sin. More will be said on this matter when we speak of the connection between grace and free-

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will. (n. 619.) The person who is confirmed in grace need not necessarily know that he has received this favour; if he does know it, then the revelation includes the assurance that Final Perseverance will be his.

600. *Natural Goodness.*—So far we have been considering the incapacity of the will of fallen man, if unaided by grace; we now proceed to consider what there is to which his unaided power is adequate, and we assert that he is capable of resisting the less urgent temptations that assail him and of doing acts which have natural goodness. Without grace he can do nothing that draws him nearer to the supernatural possession of God (nn. 592, 593), nor can he resist all temptations to grievous sin (n. 598); but it is false to say that he necessarily yields to every temptation, or that all his works, whatever he does, are sin, removing him away from God. It might be thought that when we insist on these points we are fighting a shadow; but unfortunately, the shadow is deemed to have substance by too many among the sects which have arisen during the last three centuries, following the teaching of Luther, with more or less variety. We shall speak of the central Lutheran doctrine of Justification by Faith only in the course of our next Treatise (n. 632); at present it is enough to show what is the doctrine of the Church on one of the points involved, and to justify this doctrine.

The doctrine of the Church is seen in the condemnation of a long series of propositions put

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forward by heretics. We can cite only a very few, which, however, shall be selected so as to exhibit the chief points. First, the Council of Constance in 1418 condemned some propositions which summarized the teaching of John Huss, and the sixteenth ran as follows: Human acts fall into two classes, as being virtuous or vicious: because if the man is vicious and does any act, he acts viciously; if he is virtuous and does any act, he acts virtuously. (Denz. 537.) Pope Leo X. condemned the doctrine taught by Luther, that the just man sins in every good work. (Art. 31; Denz. 655.) The Council of Trent (Sess. 6, can. 7; Denz. 699) pronounces an anathema against those who say that works done before justification, whatever be their character, are truly sins or deserve the hatred of God; or that the more earnestly one prepare himself for grace, the more grievously does he sin. St. Pius V. and other Popes condemned the teaching of Baius (n. 390, vi.) that all the works of those who have not faith are sins, and the virtues of the philosophers are vices (Prop. 25; Denz. 905); that it is a Pelagian error to say that free-will has power to avoid sin (Prop. 28; Denz. 908); and that whatever is done by a sinner, or servant of sin, is a sin. (Prop. 35; Denz. 915.) Jansenius (n. 390, vi.) followed on the same lines, as did the Synod of Pistoia (n. 189); but it will suffice if we add one proposition taken from Quesnel, and condemned in 1713 by the Bull *Unigenitus* (Prop. 59; Denz. 1274): The prayer of the impious is a new sin, and what God grants them is a new condemnation.

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These citations show the chief forms taken by the error against which the Church has had to contend. It were endless to set forth all the shades of doctrine that have found favour among the children of the Reformation; but it may be observed that some of these heretics professed to be faithful sons of the Catholic Church at the very time when they were refusing submission to her voice as uttered by the Roman Pontiff with the concurrence of the whole Episcopate. (n. 290.) They were loud in protesting that they were not Lutherans: and they dissociated themselves from the Protestant leader by pointing out that he represented all works done before justification as being sins on account of the corrupt principle from which they proceeded, for this principle was the nature of fallen man: the Jansenists drew the same consequence from the circumstance that these acts sprang from concupiscence, which is present in man on account of sin and cannot, they said, lead to anything but sin. We have given the true account of this matter elsewhere. (n. 485.)

The official declaration of the Established Church in England on the subject before us is found in the thirteenth of the Thirty-Nine Articles. "Works done before the Grace of God and the Inspiration of His Spirit are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive Grace, or as the School Authors say deserve Grace of Congruity: yea rather, for that they are not done as God commanded and willed them to be done, we doubt not but that they have the nature of sin."

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It will be observed that this is the doctrine of Luther, expressed in cautious language, avoiding the bluntness that shocks.

All these forms of error have for their basis the denial of the possibility of pure nature (n. 489), and forgetfulness that an act is not necessarily to be called evil merely because it does not contain goodness of the supernatural order. Nothing can be stigmatized as sin which does not take us further from God: but it is impossible to believe that one who has offended God grievously, and not been reconciled, is taken further from God, if he gives alms out of a motive of natural pity, or appeals to God to help him not to add new sin to that of which he feels the guiltiness; yet these consequences follow if the Catholic doctrine is not admitted. Still more clearly is it absurd to suppose that one to whom the revelation of Christ has never been preached is removed from God by every act that he does without having faith.

The teaching of Scripture is so plain, that it is strange to learn that it has been overlooked. The Holy Ghost does not seek to lead men to sin; yet sinners are encouraged to pray (3 Kings viii. 38), and their prayer procures for them reconciliation with God, as we read of the publican in the Temple. (St. Luke xviii. 13, 14.) The same is true of persons who have not faith, but receive reward for service done for God, as we are told of Nabuchodonosor (Ezech. xxix. 20); and Daniel urges the same infidel King to redeem his sins by alms, and God would perhaps forgive him. (Daniel iv. 24.)

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Whatever passages can be cited from the Scripture or the Fathers that seem opposed to our doctrine as to natural good works will be found on examination to teach no more than that works done without grace are not salutary, or do not help us to salvation: which is what has been already established against the Pelagians. Especially, we shall fail to understand the meaning of St. Augustine unless we keep constantly in mind who they were for whom he was writing. (n. 389.)

601. *Catholic Schools.*—There are some points connected with our present subject in which certain Catholic Schools of Theology are not in agreement. (See n. 220.) The Augustinian school hold, as all Catholics must, that works of which the proximate end is good may be done without grace, but they do not regard it as certain that these works are good if we look to their ultimate end. The considerations by which they think that they can distinguish their doctrine from what was condemned in the case of Baius are too subtle for our pages. Vasquez was not convinced that any good work could be done without some help being afforded to the understanding, but he acknowledged that nothing was needed for the will. Ripalda supplemented our doctrine by maintaining the existence of a general law of God's supernatural providence that grace should never be wanting when a good work is done; according to him, therefore, the case discussed in our last paragraph never arises. We may wish that this were true, but our wishes are an insecure basis for an opinion on such a subject, and Ripalda's

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view is hard to reconcile with some authoritative documents which represent natural good works as *being* possible without grace: Ripalda could only say that they *would be* possible. Most theologians, therefore, avow themselves absolutely unable to say what is the providence of God in this matter. We must be content with this bare indication of the existence of the difficulty.

602. *Recapitulation.*—In this chapter we have shown that man can do nothing helpful to his salvation unless he act under the influence of the internal, supernatural, actual grace of God; nor can he, unaided, resist all the temptations that he will meet with. But even without aid he can resist some temptations, and with ordinary aid he can resist all temptation, if he please to use the grace which is afforded him, which, however, he will not do so perfectly as to escape all venial sin; also, he can, without grace, do some acts which are not sins withdrawing him from God, even if they have no salutary effect to draw him to God. The Catholic doctrine, therefore, lies between the Pelagian error which ascribes too much power to the unaided will of man, and the Lutheran error which ascribes too little.

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CHAPTER III.

DISTRIBUTION OF GRACE.

603. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In our last chapter we saw that the salvation of men is hopeless, unless they receive during their life that internal supernatural gift of God which is called actual grace: it is therefore a point of much interest to know who they are to whom this gift is given; whether there are any to whom it is absolutely refused, or whether there are any conditions to the fulfilment of which the gift is attached, so that under these conditions a man can be said to have a right to the needful supply of grace. We shall see that the gift of grace by God to man is wholly gratuitous, so that no act of the man done without the aid of grace has the smallest positive tendency to secure grace for him; but that in fact God is always ready to give it to all classes of men as it is needed; and that a man who acts under the influence of actual grace can do what tends to secure him a further supply of the same gift. As this impetratory effect attaches in a peculiar manner to prayer, the opportunity will be taken of making a few remarks on this great means of drawing closer and closer the union of the creature to his Creator.

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604. *Grace Gratuitous.*—We have already (n. 582) remarked that the idea of gratuitousness attaches to all the uses of the word "grace," but we must now go a little more deeply into the matter, and we shall show that, according to Catholic doctrine, grace is an absolutely gratuitous gift, which cannot in any sense be earned by natural works; so that not even prayer is of the smallest avail for obtaining grace, unless this prayer is itself raised to the supernatural level by being made under the influence of grace. In order that this statement may be properly understood we must give some explanations as to what is meant by merit, so far as bears upon our present subject: the fuller discussion of the matter finds its place in our next Treatise. (nn. 650—656.)

Merit is the English form of a Latin word which signifies that which is "earned:" it corresponds therefore to "wages:" and a meritorious work is one by which wages are earned: it must therefore be in itself a work leading to a valuable result, and there must be some one who is bound to compensate it: for no wages are earned by performance of a useless task, nor even by toil which produces a useful result, unless the circumstances give the toiler a right to reward. We have merit in the full sense only when this right is a definite claim against a definite person who is bound in justice; and merit of this sort is known to theologians as "condign." This word is scarcely used in modern English, except as expressing that punishment which is fully deserved, a usage originating with the Tudor Parliaments; but it was once commonly used in the

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language in a wider sense, for whatever had been justly earned, and some attempts to revive it have been made in recent times; certainly some word is wanted to express the idea. There are cases where it cannot be said that a work has any condign merit, so as to raise an obligation of justice, though it may form the basis of a claim to the generosity of another, which it would be unhandsome to refuse to acknowledge. In this case the work is said to have "congruous" merit, because of the congruity, or fitness, that the claim should be recognized.

Merit, whether condign or congruous, always attaches to some act done by him who merits of such nature as in some way to redound to the advantage of the person to whom it appeals. Acts which do not so redound, or even omissions, may be considered as dispositions, either positive or negative, which will be taken into account, if any question of merit arise, but which are not themselves merits. A bare request or expression of the need of one party and the abundance of the other, is not necessarily meritorious, but it will often have the character of congruous merit. The effect of a successful request is called impetration.

What has been here said may be illustrated by the case of a visit paid by a king to some city of his dominions. Great efforts have been made to prepare for his reception; many workmen have been employed and have been paid their wages, and the mayor who was active in making the arrangements receives a mark of the royal favour.

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Also, the bounty of the king is successfully solicited on behalf of a poor man of unimpeachable character who meets with an accident on the day of the entry. In this case the workmen have condign merit, the merits of the mayor are congruous. The victim of the accident has no merits, but his good character is a negative disposition pointing to some unmerited bounty, and his misfortune is a positive disposition towards the same. The bounty is impetrated by him that makes the request, who not improbably will have some congruous merit. We may suppose that the king promises to give some aid to the wounded man, and afterwards fulfils his promise; even in this case, although the fulfilment was in some sense a debt, yet being founded on a purely gratuitous promise, it cannot be said to have been earned.

605. *The Doctrine proved.*—We proceed to prove that grace is altogether gratuitous, so that it cannot be merited in either of the senses explained, nor can it be impetrated, unless the meritorious act or the prayer be itself supernatural, being itself the fruit of grace. And first, that no natural act can merit grace condignly follows from what we have already proved, that without grace no step can be made towards salvation (nn. 591—593), and we have shown that this is the defined doctrine of the Church: the contrary is in fact the rankest Pelagianism. The proof is found in the words of St. Paul, If by grace, it is not now by works; otherwise grace is no more grace (Romans xi. 6); and again, To him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned

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according to grace, but according to debt; and St. Augustine expresses the same idea when he says, We no longer have the name and meaning of grace when it is not given gratuitously but is conferred on him that deserves it. The theological reason is found in the consideration that in all cases of condign merit, there is some proportion between the work done and the wages that recompense the work: but no work done by merely natural powers bears any proportion whatever to supernatural grace; the two things differ in kind. If natural works could have merited grace, redemption by the Blood of Christ (n. 542) would have been needless, and what is really the lavished bounty of God would have been the payment of a debt.

As to congruous merit and impetration, exactly the same arguments apply, for grace must be gratuitous under every aspect. The contrary error was that of the Semi-Pelagians, and was condemned by the Second Council of Orange in France, in 529 (Denz. 146); the Council adopts the use made by St. Paul (Romans x. 20) of the words of the Prophet Isaias (c. lxvi.), I was found by them that did not seek Me; I appeared openly to them that asked not after Me. These words forcibly express the truth that even the beginnings of faith are not granted out of regard to any prayer or other work that is purely our own.

The fundamental verity belonging to this subject, that there is no proportion between what is natural and what is supernatural, shows further that no natural act can be a positive disposition towards

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grace; all that nature can do is to secure the negative disposition of purity from sin, which can be attained to some extent, although not altogether, without grace. (nn. 598, 600.)

606. *An Axiom explained.*—There is a well-known axiom current among theologians, which has found its way also into the common knowledge of instructed Catholics, but which is liable to be misunderstood as if it were opposed to the doctrine that we have been explaining. It declares that, to the man who does what he can, God does not refuse grace. The form into which this pithy statement is thrown appears to be due to the earlier scholastics (n. 6), but in substance the doctrine expressed by it is quite familiar to the Fathers; and especially St. Isidore of Pelusium, an Egyptian hermit of the fifth century, uses words which come very near to those now employed. (Ep. v. 459; *P.G.* 78, 1593.) Lutheran and Jansenist heretics alike inveighed against the doctrine which they supposed to be conveyed by the axiom, for they imagined that those who employed it meant that the first grace received by a man was earned by works done by him previously, in the exercise of his natural powers. This doctrine is precisely that of the Semi-Pelagians, and therefore cannot have been what was intended by the scholastics who introduced the formula, and who were perfectly familiar with the condemnation of this sect. The fact is that the words will bear various meanings, all of which are included in the full sense; we will point out some of these, and they will be seen to be quite consistent with the Catholic

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doctrine that no exercise of purely natural powers will merit grace.

St. Thomas (*Summa*, 1. 2. q. 109. a. 6. ad. 2.) understands the axiom of habitual grace, and explains that God does not refuse the favour of justification to one who having received actual grace uses it aright. This partial sense is, of course, unobjectionable. Others explain, that helping grace will not be wanting to a man who makes a good use of stirring grace (n. 583, vii.); and in this view also, the axiom is free from all taint of Semi-Pelagianism. The axiom may also be taken as expressing the view of those who hold (n. 601) that God's grace is always given whenever any good work is done; but we saw that this benevolent doctrine is without sufficient foundation, and is open to difficulties. It is best to understand the axiom as applying whenever a man does his best under the circumstances in which he finds himself; if he be under the influence of grace, and use it well, he will earn further grace, whether habitual or actual: if he have no supernatural grace, although he cannot earn it, nor even positively dispose himself to it, yet he can dispose himself negatively by resisting temptation, and the medicinal aid of God will not be wanting to him. (n. 583, ix.)

It is by all means to be observed that the bounty of God in dealing with sinners in truth goes further than is expressed in any understanding of the axiom; for it perpetually happens that stirring grace (n. 583, vii.) is poured upon men who are far from being negatively disposed for it, for on the

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contrary they are positively indisposed, being abandoned to a headlong career of vice.

607. *Nature of Prayer.*—We have now to consider the subject of grace being given on account of acts which have been done under the influence of an earlier grace. All such acts are, in a wide sense, prayer, but the present will be a convenient place for some remarks on the great privilege and exercise of piety which more especially goes under this name.

Prayer is sufficiently described as being the elevation of the heart and mind to God, which is the account given of it by St. John Damascene. (*De Fid. Orthod.* 3, 24; *P.G.* 94, 1089.) Prayer is then in some sense a conversation between man and God, and is therefore to be distinguished from speaking about God to a fellow-man. Prayer is the highest act of worship of which man is capable, being higher than sacrifice of inanimate objects, for he that prays makes, in some manner, an offering of himself, and sacrifice is valueless unless accompanied by prayer; but the one Christian Sacrifice of the Mass excels all other kinds of prayer in force and value. There is a question between the Thomists and the Scotists, as to the power of the soul to which we should refer prayer. St. Thomas argues (2. 2. q. 83. a. 1.) that it is an act of the reason, and he is generally followed, it being, however, conceded to the Scotists that some act of the will is presupposed in all prayer.

Prayer is an act of the virtue of religion, and is possible only to such created spirits as have not incurred the dreadful sentence of eternal separation

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from God. God cannot pray to Himself, nor can the Divine Persons pray to each other. It is true that St. Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit as asking for us with unspeakable groanings (Romans viii. 26), but no understanding of this passage is consistent with the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, except that which explains it as pointing to the grace of the Holy Spirit (n. 421, vii.) that moves men to pray. We read in the Gospel, of requests made to God by evil spirits (St. Matt. viii. 31), or by lost souls (St. Luke xvi. 24—31), but these outcries were no acts of religion intended for the honour of God. Among living men, none can pray who do not believe in the existence of a supreme personal God, having intellect and will (n. 374); nor can they who deny that God is good and merciful. Prayer made without grace is, as we have seen (n. 604), incapable of bearing supernatural fruit; but when prayer is necessary for salvation grace will not be wanting, for God does not command what is impossible, but in giving the command He warns us to do what is in our power, and to ask for what is beyond our power, and He helps us to gain the power: as the Council of Trent teaches. (Sess. 6, cap. 11; Denz. 686.)

There are passages of the Holy Scripture which might be thought to suggest that God does not hear the prayer of sinners. This would seem to have been the impression among the Jews in the time of Christ (St. John ix. 31), and it may have been derived from the words of Solomon, He that turneth away his ears from hearing the law, his

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prayer shall be an abomination (Prov. xxviii. 9; see, too, Psalm lxv. 18); but it is plain that the impression is false, as we are taught by the examples of David (2 Kings xii. 13), Manasses (2 Paral. xxxiii. 12), St. Mary Magdalene (St. Luke vii. 37, 48), and the Thief on the Cross. (St. Luke xxiii. 42, 43.) The passages of the Old Testament that are cited to the contrary, must therefore be understood of prayer made by a sinner in his character of sinner, and for the furtherance of the designs of his sinful heart, or at least of hypocritical prayer: and we must reject the teaching of Wycliff (Prop. 26; Denz. 502) and of Quesnel (Propp. 50, 59; Denz. 1265, 1274), that the prayer of a sinner is useless and is in fact a new sin.

The blessed angels and saints in Heaven do not make petition for themselves, for they do not feel any need; but they intercede for others, as we shall see in our closing Treatise. It is most probable that the suffering souls in Purgatory pray to God to relieve such necessities of living men as are known to them; also, they ask Him to inspire men yet on earth to offer prayer and satisfaction for them.

Reserving for another place what is to be said as to asking the intercession of saints and angels, we may say that all prayer is made to God, whether considered as One by nature, or as subsisting in the Three Persons. The prayers of the Church are mostly addressed to God the Father, to whom Power is ascribed by appropriation. (n. 421, vii.) Prayer to the unincarnate Word of God is not usual,

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and invocation of the Holy Spirit is not frequent except in litanies and hymns. The Incarnate Son of God is often addressed in prayer, both as He exists in Heaven, and as He abides on earth in the Blessed Sacrament; and we have already spoken of the adoration of the Sacred Humanity. (n. 535.)

As to the things for which it is lawful to pray, St. Thomas (2. 2. q. 83. a. 6. c.) adopts the doctrine of St. Augustine (Epist. 130 [121], *Ad Probam*) that we may lawfully pray for whatever we may lawfully desire: and this is certainly the Catholic rule. Prayer for specific objects was wholly disapproved, or grudgingly conceded by some of the best among the heathen philosophers, as Socrates (*Valerius Maximus*, 7, 2), and moralists, as Juvenal (*Sat.* 10); their reason was that we cannot foresee what result will follow if our petition be granted, and therefore it is better to leave all to the merciful foresight of the gods. The same view is taken by certain sects that call themselves Christians, but as to whom there is room for doubt whether they are not tainted with some form of pantheistic error, so that they do not heartily admit the existence of a Personal God, and Wycliff, in accordance with his predestinarian doctrine (n. 391), allowed no prayer but what is conceived in general terms; for, he said, the Divine will is fixed, so that all specific prayer will either be profane as opposed to God's will, or useless as asking that which will certainly come. A false mysticism had considerable vogue in Spain in the course of the sixteenth century; its followers, who called themselves *Illuminati*, or the enlightened,

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rejected all external practice of devotion, maintaining that a perfect Christian should hold himself perfectly passive, and await the inspirations of God; and they consistently held that this rest of the spirit was the only prayer that should be made. Reprobation of all specific prayer was one of the points of the system of Quietism which was brought into Italy about the year 1680 by the Spaniard, Molinos, who found disciples throughout the Catholic world. A series of propositions formulating his doctrine was condemned in 1687 by Pope Innocent XI. (Denz. 1088—1155.)

The Quietist objection to specific prayer was, that it is inconsistent with full resignation to the will of God. But when a Catholic makes prayer of petition in the spirit of the Church, he always understands, and generally expresses, the condition that what he asks is in accord with the Divine good-pleasure. He has no fear that his Heavenly Father will be over-compliant, and give him what he asks, even to his ruin, which was the blasphemous notion of the pagan (Juv. *Sat.* x. 7, 111; compare St. Matt. vii. 11); and he knows that his prayer has been foreseen for all eternity, and that the decrees of Providence have been made in view of it. The Holy Scripture affords us a multitude of examples of prayer for special blessings. We can do no more than refer to a few of the most striking, which may serve as models for all men. (Genesis xviii. 22—32; Josue vii. 7—9; 1 Kings i. 11; 3 Kings xvii. 21; Daniel ix. 4—19; St. Luke xviii. 13; Acts i. 24, iv. 24—30; 2 Cor. xii. 8.)

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608. *The Duty of Prayer.*—We are told in the Gospel that we ought always to pray, and not to faint (St. Luke xviii. 1), and St. Paul, yet more expressly, would have us pray without ceasing (1 Thess. v. 17); and the son of Sirach warns us to let nothing hinder us from praying always. (Ecclus. xviii. 22.) These texts were taken in their literal meaning by a strange, half-pagan sect of heretics, who attracted attention towards the middle of the fourth century, having their chief seat in Armenia and Syria. They were called Euchites, from the Greek word (εὐχή) signifying prayer, and the name Messalians, which was also given to them, has probably the same meaning in some Eastern language: they must not be confounded with the Massilians, or Semi-Pelagians, who had their origin near Marseilles. (n. 390.) From the supposed duty of incessant prayer, these Euchites deduced the corollary that they had no time left for labour, and they must support themselves by begging. They came in conflict with the civil authorities, and disappeared from view, but traces of their continued existence are discoverable for many centuries. The texts are no more than counsels, urging us to live so as to be always ready to pray, and so as to make all our acts a kind of appeal to God and honour to Him.

Probably no Christian body have ever professed themselves altogether opposed to all use of prayer, for the authority of the Scripture is too clear; but the use of merely general prayer, to which some would confine themselves (n. 607), is apt in practice

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to be scarcely distinguishable from total disuse. The Catholic Church teaches that prayer is ordinarily necessary for salvation, for without prayer the needful graces will not be given (St. James iv. 2); in particular, the grace of final perseverance is to be gained by prayer maintained to the end. (n. 599.) It will be enough to cite two passages of the Fathers, in addition to what we have already given. Gennadius declares the belief of Christians that no man reaches salvation except by the invitation of God; nor, when invited, can he secure salvation except by the aid of God; nor does he secure this aid except by prayer (*De Dogmat. Eccles.* § 6; *P.L.* 58, 995); and Pope Zosimus writes to the Bishops of Gaul, "In all our actions, thoughts, and motions, we must pray to Him who is our Helper and Protector; that human nature should presume upon its powers is mere pride." (Denz. 93.)

Men are, therefore, always bound by the duty of making use of prayer, but it is not necessary, nor indeed possible, that they should make prayer their sole occupation. That the texts which we have quoted do not require prayer to be incessant, is proved by the practice of the Church and the necessities of human life. They are forms of expression, insisting on the absolute necessity of prayer, and on the duty of persevering in prayer, even when the favour asked is not granted immediately. This explanation is better than that given by some writers, that the whole life of one who habitually strives to serve God is a powerful prayer. (St. Thomas, 2. 2. q. 83. a. 4.) This is perfectly true, if prayer be

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taken in a wide, improper sense, in accordance with the common axiom that to toil is to pray (*laborare est orare*); but it is quite false if it be understood as meaning that the exercise of other virtues is sufficient in itself, so as to dispense with the necessity of that conversation with God which alone is properly called prayer. (n. 607.)

The duty of a creature to acknowledge his dependence on the Creator by prayer and other acts of worship, undoubtedly exists, but is so indefinite that it can hardly be considered as urging at any particular time; it is abundantly fulfilled by any one who uses such prayer as his particular circumstances render obligatory. It is considered by theologians that there is a natural duty of prayer on attaining the use of reason, when the man accepts his position as bound to serve God; also, when the end of life is seen to be approaching, that the soul may be prepared for the change. It is obvious that prayer is a duty in time of grievous temptations, for such temptation cannot, morally, be resisted without grace (n. 598), and grace is ordinarily granted in answer to prayer. Also, we should pray to be delivered from the approach of temptation, as from every other great danger. (St. Matt. vi. 13.) Charity at times requires that we should make intercession with God on behalf of our fellow-men, living or dead. But the most frequent occasion when prayer becomes a duty is the time when it is an obligatory part of some other action, such as hearing Mass, or receiving the Sacraments. When some particular practice of

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prayer is general among some class of persons, neglect of this practice by an individual will seldom be free from sin, not only on account of sloth, and of scandal to others, but also on account of the risk of grave evil following on the loss of grace which would have been secured but for the neglect. This remark applies to the morning and night prayers, which are in general use among all Christians; and there are still some parts of the world where the same may be said of the daily Mass, the Rosary, and the *Angelus*, though there is no law prescribing these practices.

All Christian prayer is made through the merits of Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession for us (Hebrews vii. 25); and when His Name is studiously omitted from a prayer, there is room for grave suspicion that the prayer is not that of a Christian. Christ is the Mediator between God and men (1 Timothy ii. 5), through whom we have access to the Father (Romans v. 2; Ephes. ii. 18); and there is no other name under Heaven given to men whereby we must be saved. (Acts iv. 12.) No one who believes this will fail to use the Name in all his prayers; and he that fails to employ the form of offering prayer through Christ, according to the practice of the Church, may well be suspected of being a heathen.

609. *Effects of Prayer.*—Prayer, like other good works, is meritorious and satisfactory, concerning which ideas we shall have another opportunity of speaking; but its characteristic effect is impetration, or the attainment of what is asked for. Prayer

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appeals to the Bountifulness and Mercy of God, and it has no worthiness of its own calling on His Justice; in this respect the prayer of Christ stood alone, on account of the infinite dignity of His Person. But there are many places in Scripture where the promise is made that prayer shall not be offered in vain. Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth. (St. Matt. v. 8; St. Luke xi. 9—13.) We are to ask and we shall receive, that our joy may be full (St. John xvi. 24); and God heareth us whatsoever we ask. (1 St. John v. 15.) This promise, however, is not unconditional. It would take us too far from our subject to develope the ideas of due intention, attention, devotion, faith, humility, resignation, and trust in Christ, which should be found in prayer, and the want of which may constitute that asking amiss of which St. James speaks (iv. 3) as explaining why prayer sometimes remains unheard. But further, what we ask for must be according to God's will, as St. John points out to us (1 St. John v. 14), and this can be said unconditionally only of what tends to our salvation; and even when the thing would of its own nature tend to keep us from sin and unite us to God, it may be that in our peculiar circumstances it would be harmful to us (2 Cor. xii. 7, 8), or perhaps could not be given without spiritual loss being caused to our neighbour. The wise Physician knows what is good for His patient, and often withholds what the patient desires, replacing it by something more suitable for restoring vigour. (St. Aug. Tract. 73, *In S. Joan.* n. 3; *P.L.* 35, 1826.) The promise of

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prayer is made only in regard of such petitions as each man offers on his own behalf (St. Luke xi. 9); intercessory prayer on behalf of others is assuredly not without its value, for it runs through the whole of that great model of all Christian devotion, the Lord's Prayer; but the fulfilment must depend upon the dispositions of those on whose behalf it is made, for God does not force the free-will of men.

Prayer will be more effectual as it is made with purer intention, profounder attention, with more of faith and the other qualities that we enumerated just now; and especially when it is persevering, in spite of apparent fruitlessness, like that of the widow who, continually coming, wearied the unjust judge, and forced him to avenge her of her adversary (St. Luke xviii. 1—8); deep humility (Ecclus. xxxv. 21) and full trust (St. Matt. xxi. 21) give special force to prayer, as do works of penance and almsgiving that accompany it (St. Matt. xvii. 20; Tobias xii. 8, 12); and when other things are equal, the prayer of one who is in the grace of God is of most avail (St. James v. 16—18), although, as we have seen, the promise of prayer extends to all men, even to sinners; and it must always be borne in mind that the root of the efficacy of prayer is the bountifulness of God.

Impetration is the principal effect of prayer, and belongs more especially to prayer of petition; but there is also true prayer when man addresses His Creator in words of praise, or of thanksgiving, or in humble worship and expression of his sense of dependence. A chief place among subjects of prayer

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must be given to the sorrowing acknowledgment of sin, with petition for pardon and for grace to avoid sin for the future, which we call an act of contrition. Intercession is a particular form of petition.

610. *Varieties of Prayer.*—There is no prayer without internal attention to the act, and some prayer is wholly internal, as when we meditate on a truth, or contemplate some event in the life of our Lord; but generally some outward action goes along with the interior action, giving it new intensity; and especially words formed on the lips or uttered aloud are found to be profitable, and have always been employed wherever any use is made of prayer. Many examples of vocal prayer are found in Scripture, both in the Old Testament (Exodus ii. 23; Judges iii. 9; &c.) and in the New (St. Matt. vi. 9; St. John xi. 41; Hebrews v. 7, xiii. 15); and it is strange to find that Wycliff, who boasted that he followed the teaching of Scripture, should have rejected all bodily action in connection with prayer; and after him the Quietists did the same. (n. 607.) These dupes of a false piety refused to sanction anything that could disturb the work of God in the soul; and it is sometimes urged that God is a Spirit (n. 375), and therefore all worship offered to Him ought to be purely spiritual. (St. John iv. 24.) The answer is that He who created man with body and soul (Genesis ii. 7) knows how intimate is the connection between these two elements of his nature, and how powerfully each is affected by the other: when the soul is greatly moved, the body participates in the excitement; and certain gestures

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of the body add vigour to the actions of the soul. This is the theoretical justification, should it be needed, of such practices as kneeling in time of prayer (Daniel vi. 10; Acts xxi. 5), striking the breast (St. Luke xxviii. 13), and the like. It is bootless to inquire into the origin of these practices: they exist, and they have the sanction of the Church: to neglect them wholly is therefore nothing but imprudent presumption and self-will.

Writers on liturgical matters discuss the question what are the precise differences expressed by the words "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings," which describe the varieties of prayer that St. Paul would wish men should make (1 Timothy ii. 1); but they do not arrive at any assured result, and the point is of merely antiquarian interest. It may be observed that the Collects of the Mass, which are authoritative specimens of the suitable structure of prayers, usually fall into four parts: the address names the Person to whom the prayer is made; a relative sentence, called the "inducement," introduces the ground on which we make our prayer, and is often an act of thanksgiving; the petition itself then follows; and finally the commendation expresses that the whole is offered in the name of Christ. (n. 608.)

Prayer is sometimes made by persons who act as ministers of the Church, and in obedience to her laws, as when the Divine Office is sung or said by priests and religious. In this case written forms are necessarily employed, and these are also con-

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venient when prayer is to be made in common by the members of a family or larger assemblage of people. Even when prayer is offered by one person alone, he will usually find it most profitable to employ some of the forms that have been drawn up for the purpose, and which are sanctioned by the approval of the Church and the general experience of the faithful; such are the Our Father and Hail Mary. We find directions for a set form of prayer in Deuteronomy (xxvi. 13, seq.); and the Book of Psalms has been habitually used as a storehouse of devotional language in the Synagogue no less than in the Church. We cannot doubt that the hymn which was sung by the Christians of the second century to Christ as a God (n. 41) was a set form; and the regulations made by the Church for public worship can be traced back to the remotest antiquity.

It is to be observed that no form of words must be regarded as having any constraining power over the free-will whether of created spirits or of their Creator, such as is imagined by those who profess to teach an art of magic. (n. 455.) Nothing but the grossest superstition could ascribe any such effect to Christian prayer. It is the bountiful free-will of God that has linked grace to the due use of the Sacraments that He has instituted.

611. *Grace of the Just.*—Coming now to the proper subject of this chapter, the Distribution of Grace, we shall show that just as the will of God to save men (n. 389) and the Redemption wrought by Christ (n. 543) extend to all men, so all men who

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attain the use of reason have throughout their lives the grace that is necessary to enable them to attain salvation, or at least the means of securing this grace, if they choose to employ them; the chief among these means being prayer made under the influence of supernatural grace, without which it would be useless for the purpose. (n. 604.) We shall prove our doctrine in successive paragraphs, dealing with different classes of men, and first with the just. (n. 184, ii.)

It was the teaching of Jansenius that the observance of some commandments of God is impossible to the just, even if they wish and endeavour to observe them: nor have they the grace to make these commandments possible of observance. This proposition was condemned by Pope Innocent X. in 1653 as heretical (Denz. 966): its contradictory therefore is a part of the Catholic faith.

The proof of the doctrine is found in the passage that we have already quoted in another connection (1 Cor. x. 13; n. 598), which teaches that God will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able; with this agrees the assurance given in Ecclesiasticus (xv. 16): "If thou wilt keep the commandments and perform acceptable fidelity for ever, they shall preserve thee." If any of the commandments were impossible to observe, it could not be said that the yoke of Christ is sweet and His burden light (St. Matt. xi. 30): the yoke would be galling and the burden insupportable; and St. John tells us (1 St. John v. 3) that the commandments of

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God are not heavy. St. Augustine asks, Think you that God will neglect, desert, abandon, the just man that lives by faith? No: He will cherish and help him, supply all that is needful, remove what is harmful. The Lord will never be wanting to you: be it your care never to be wanting to the Lord, never wanting to yourself. (St. Aug. *Enarr. in Ps.* xxxix. n. 27; *P.L.* 36, 450.) The same doctrine is taught by the second Council of Orange (can. 25; Denz. 169), so that Scripture and Tradition alike justified the decree of the Council of Trent (Sess. 6, can. 18; Denz. 710), which condemned the assertion that some commandments of God cannot be observed by a man who has been justified and is in grace.

It will be observed that we do not say that each man always has the grace which renders it morally possible for him to resist temptation, but that either he has it or he could obtain it. It is useless therefore for the Jansenists to allege instances where just men have sinned, unless they prove that these just men neither could resist the temptation when it came, nor would have obtained the grace they needed, had they been diligent in prayer. To urge that in our doctrine, even those who are not predestined to glory might have persevered to the end is a mere juggle of language: they might have persevered, had they chosen to use their opportunities, and then they would have been among the number of the predestined: in fact, they do not choose to persevere, and it is the Divine foresight of this choice of theirs that makes them not to be

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predestined. (n. 184, iii.) Certain passages quoted from St. Augustine and other authorities are easily understood when it is remembered that they are directed against the Pelagians, who did not acknowledge any need of supernatural grace.

612. *The Grace of Sinners.*—A man who is in sin needs grace to avoid further sin, and also to enable him to turn away from his sin and gain the friendship of God. The texts of Scripture just quoted (n. 610) suffice to assure us that he will have grace to resist fresh temptations, for they make no distinction between the just and the unjust: and Holy Scripture is full of exhortations, in which sinners are begged to return to God: it must therefore be possible for them to do so, and it is not possible without grace. The invitation given by Christ is well known: Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you (St. Matt. xi. 28); there is no heavier burden than sin, no labour so toilsome as the service of Satan. There is a forcible declaration by God (Ezech. xxxiii. 11) that He desires not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; and then follows the almost suppliant exhortation, Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: and why will you die, O house of Israel? These words would be a mockery, if the house of Israel had not the grace, without which they could not turn. The Council of Trent therefore followed the inspired Word of God, when it taught our doctrine (Sess. 6, can. 14; Denz. 690), in opposition to Luther and Calvin, who held that sinners were unable to escape from

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their sin. They were misled by certain passages of St. Augustine, which they studied without due regard to the scope of the author.

613. *The Obdurate.*—A special difficulty is raised as to the case of those sinners who are called obdurate, on whom the ordinary means of grace have been tried, but fruitlessly: they are unmoved amidst influences that would soften all but the hardest hearts, destitute of pity, of fear, of gratitude, of shame; forgetful of the past, heedless of the present, without care to provide for the future. This description is taken from St. Bernard (*De Consider.* i. 2, n. 3; *P.L.* 182, 730), and experience shows that there are men in whom it seems to be fully satisfied: but we regard it as certain that grace is offered even to these in such measure that it lies with them to repent of their sins and regain the favour of God, if they will to do so.

The proof is found in those passages of Scripture which reprove obdurate sinners for their obstinacy, which is therefore wilful. St. Stephen declares (Acts vii. 51) that the Jews who judged him were stiff-necked, and always resisted the Holy Ghost: they might therefore have yielded to the pleadings with them of the Divine mercy. The Gentiles treasured to themselves wrath according to their hardness and impenitent heart (Romans ii. 5); and our doctrine is included in the general declaration that God loves all things that are, and hateth none of the things that He has made (Wisdom xi. 25), which words at least throw on those who deny that sinners can pray effectually the burden of proving

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their point: a burden which we are prepared to take on ourselves in the case of those who have passed out of this life. All these texts are merely different forms of expressing what we have elsewhere proved, that God will have all men to be saved (n. 389), and that Christ died for all (n. 543); and the mind of the Church is sufficiently seen if we reflect on the obloquy which would be incurred by any priest, charged with the care of souls, who should refuse to exercise his ministry in the case of some dying sinner, on the ground that the man was obdurate and deserted by God. The wise spiritual physician, no less than he who tends the body, would feel that while there is life there is hope.

There are certain passages of Scripture which seem to teach that in the case of obdurate sinners repentance and salvation are impossible; that God Himself hardens them, and wills not that they should be converted. We may observe, in general, that no more is meant than the moral impossibility, when it is judged that the sinner will not choose to use the help given to him; and that the hardening spoken of is merely negative, referring to the Divine decree not to give grace beyond a certain amount, which suffices to make conversion truly possible, but which will not be used by him to whom it is offered. These texts also admit of another explanation, according to which the reference is to something done, the foreseen result of which will be that the sinner will be confirmed in his sin.

We will consider some of the more notable passages, and first we have certain words of

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St. Paul (Hebrews vi. 4—6): "It is impossible for those who were once illuminated, have tasted also the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have moreover tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and are fallen away, to be renewed again to penance; crucifying again to themselves the Son of God and making Him a mockery." We seem to have here a reference to Baptism, the Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation, together with the preaching of the Gospel, and especially of such truths as death and Judgment; and it is declared that restoration to the state of grace is impossible for one who has sinned after partaking of these ordinances. There is some difference of opinion as to the way in which this text is to be explained so as to be in harmony with the clear proofs that we have given showing that no man is excluded from hope in the mercy of God. Many good authorities think that the Apostle has in mind the case of one who has formally apostatized from the faith, whose restoration to grace is extremely difficult; as to which it is to be observed that this formal apostasy is something quite different and far more full of malice than the sin of outward denial of the faith, under stress of torture, hunger, or the like. But there is another explanation deserving notice, as being adopted by many of the Fathers and by Suarez, according to whom the text teaches that the renovation which is declared to be impossible is that wrought by the Sacrament of Baptism; there is no doubt that "enlightened" is used for "baptized" in early

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Christian language, and the point insisted on is that this Sacrament cannot be repeated. We shall see hereafter in what respects baptismal innocence is a state of greater purity from stain than that which a baptized sinner regains in the Sacrament of Penance.

There is a famous difficulty concerning a sin which we read of in the three Synoptic Gospels (St. Matt. xii. 31, 32; St. Mark iii. 28—30; St. Luke xii. 10), and which is variously described as blasphemy of the Spirit, speaking against the Holy Ghost, or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and it is declared that this sin shall not be forgiven either in this world or in the world to come; it is an everlasting sin, and shall never have forgiveness. Some have explained that this sin is final impenitence, which makes the declaration that it is unpardonable to be a mere truism; but the occasion when the words were spoken makes it clear that the sin is the malicious ascription to Satan of works done by God for the salvation of men. This was the sin of the Jews, who wilfully shut their eyes that they might escape seeing the manifest proofs presented to them of the Divine Mission of Christ, saying that He cast out devils in the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils; and the same sin is committed by all who refuse to accept the truth that is clearly presented to them. The pride which is involved in this sin is rarely vanquished by grace. Maldonatus and the other commentators may be consulted. Of Esau, it is said (Hebrews xii. 16) that he was a profane person, who for one

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mess sold his first birthright (Genesis xxv. 33), and that he found no place of repentance, although with tears he sought it. These words have been understood as meaning that Esau wished to be penitent for his sins, but was refused the necessary grace; but in truth he merely regretted the foolish bargain that he had made, and wished to revoke it but was not allowed (Hebrews xii. 17); besides which, he retained the resolve to murder his brother when opportunity should offer. (Genesis xxvii. 41.)

We reserve a few more texts of the same character until we speak of the Novatian heresy, which refused the Sacrament of Penance to certain sinners. (n. 750.)

614. *Infidels.*—The case of those men who have not faith in God requires special consideration, for there is a difficulty in seeing how grace works to put salvation within their reach. By infidel we here understand those to whom the Catholic faith has never been proposed in such a manner as to bring home to their minds that they cannot prudently decline to embrace it. These are Negative Infidels, to be distinguished from men to whom the truth has been proposed but who have refused it, or having embraced have afterwards renounced it; Positive Infidels, of either of these classes, are included with other sinners in what we have lately been saying. (nn. 612, 613.)

Among the Jansenistic propositions condemned by the Bull *Unigenitus* (n. 390), are several which teach that no grace is given except through faith, that faith is the first grace, and that no grace is

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granted outside the Church (Propp. 26, 27, 29; Denz. 1241, 1242, 1244); and Alexander VIII. had already condemned the assertion that Pagans, Jews, and heretics receive no influence from Christ. It is therefore part of the Catholic doctrine that some grace is given even to negative infidels.

Also, we hold it to be certain, although the point is not defined, that all receive such grace as is necessary for their salvation, whether proximately when the faith is offered to them, or at least remotely, as when it is the grace which stirs them to pray and gives a supernatural value to their prayer. The proofs that we have given of the universal extent of the redemption (n. 543), and of the will of God to save men (n. 389), make no exception for the case of negative infidels, and in fact St. Paul expressly includes them, when he declares (1 Timothy ii. 4) that God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth; and Christ gives light, that is, the offer of faith, to every man that cometh into this world. (St. John i. 9.)

These texts seem to be conclusive against the condemned Jansenistic doctrine, but there is not universal agreement that they must be understood as applying directly to every individual. For some writers of weight believe that they are satisfied by the external means of grace which are prepared for the race at large, and that internal grace will not be wanting to those who have the opportunity and will to avail themselves of this provision. There would not be injustice in this arrangement, for no man

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has any right to salvation; yet it seems scarcely consistent with the liberality of the Divine assurances, and therefore some say that the Christian faith is in some way proposed to every man once at least in the course of his life, but that the proposal is commonly neglected and soon forgotten. This is possible, and might be admitted to be the course of Providence if it were shown concerning any man that in no other way could he have the offer of salvation; but to set it up as the ordinary law of the distribution of grace is arbitrary. It seems therefore better to say that, as above explained (n. 605), no infidel positively merits grace, but that by using his natural powers to keep the law, as far as he is able, and being helped by grace to keep it better, he disposes himself negatively for the reception of the grace of faith, which God will offer to him by such means as He sees fit.

On this difficult point we will quote the words in which St. Thomas declares his belief. (*De Veritat.* q. 14. a. 11. ad. 1.) It is the course of God's providence to provide every man with what is needed for salvation, provided only there be no hindrance on his part. For if one who is brought up in the woods, among brute beasts, follow the leading of natural reason by seeking good and avoiding evil, we must most certainly hold that God would either reveal to him by internal inspiration what it is necessary for him to believe, or would send him a preacher, as He sent St. Peter to Cornelius. (Acts x.) The holy Doctor has the

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same teaching in another place. (2. Dist. 28. q. 1. a. 4. ad. 4.)

615. *The Grace of Religious Vocation.* — The subject of vocation to religious life is sufficiently connected with the distribution of grace in general to make this a convenient place to deal with it. We must first borrow from Ascetic Theology (n. 4) the explanation of the difference between precepts and counsels.

God has been pleased to lay certain commands or precepts upon men, the deliberate (n. 596) breach of which constitutes sin, and involves the liability to punishment, and these commands bind all men who find themselves in the circumstances to which the command applies. Thus, all men are bound to honour father and mother, and he that has incurred a debt is bound to pay it, and in either case the neglect of the command may be a mortal sin (n. 596), and all sin is breach of some command made known either by natural reason or by revelation. But it sometimes happens that God will be better served if persons put a restraint upon their liberty beyond that imposed by the precepts, and he who does so is said to act more perfectly than another who is content with avoiding sin; thus, the precept of charity may render a certain amount of almsgiving obligatory, but one who gives alms in greater abundance acts more perfectly, and one who habitually acts in this manner is said, so far, to lead a life of perfection. This doctrine of the difference between the way of the commandments and the way of perfection is plainly taught

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by our Lord (St. Matt. xix. 16—21; St. Mark x. 17—21; St. Luke xviii. 18—22) to the young man who asked what good he should do that he might have life everlasting. He was told to keep the commandments, and, in virtue of the grace with which God had favoured him, he was able to reply that he had kept them all from his youth. And he spoke truly, for had it been otherwise, Christ, who knew the hearts of men (Acts i. 24), would not have loved him (St. Mark x. 21), for He hates falsehood and self-deception; but so He gave this innocent keeper of the commandments the invitation to go up higher. "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and come and follow Me."

The way of perfection, then, consists in the following of Christ, especially by the practice of the three virtues of poverty, chastity, and obedience, which are directly opposed to our three great spiritual enemies, against which St. John warns us (1 St. John ii. 16), under the names of the concupiscence of the eyes, the concupiscence of the flesh, and the pride of life, or to the world, the flesh, and the devil, as we commonly say for shortness. If any person, under due conditions, checks the fickleness of his will by a vow of walking in this way of perfection, he is in a state of perfection, and if these vows be taken in an institute approved by the Church, he is said to have entered religion, or the religious state. The virtue of religion regulates the whole of the attitude of man towards God, and the vow to serve Him in the way of the

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counsels is regarded as eminently an act of this virtue.

An invitation such as the young man received is a vocation to religion. That such an invitation is a special grace, given to some and not to others, follows from the notion of the call to a higher perfection than that of the commandments; and we read in St. Matthew (xix. 11) the warning that the invitation to the life of chastity is not for all men, but for those to whom it is given; while constant experience shows that persons who are firmly resolved to serve God as well as they can feel no attraction whatever to the way of perfection. The Church has received no revelation as to why one person receives the grace of vocation which is not offered to another.

It follows from the very notion of a counsel, as opposed to a precept, that there is no sin directly involved in the refusal to follow it; but indirectly there will often be a sin of imprudence, if the person deliberately throw away the good thing that is offered to him. Cases are conceivable where a person sees clearly that his salvation will be jeopardized unless he seek the protection against occasions of sin which is to be found in religious life, and it will be a sin in him to incur this risk.

It is a practical question of great importance, and often of some nicety, to determine whether a particular person has received the favour of an invitation to serve God in perfection. Each case must be judged on its own merits, and the judgment must be that of the person himself, assisted by the

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advice that he will seek. We can do no more than indicate some considerations, and first there is the negative test of fitness for the life proposed. Although everything else seem to favour the idea that there is a vocation, yet there may be a defect in intellect or in body which disables the person from performing the duties of some religious institute that is open to him. Any doubt on this score may safely be left in the hands of the Superiors of the institute. Another negative test is, that the person may have already contracted binding engagements which are inconsistent with the religious life: marriage, for example. Or he may be under obligations of justice or piety which have a dominant claim upon him, as if he is bound to labour in order to gain the means of paying his debts, or if his parents stand in need of his care.

The positive side of a vocation is seen when there is the desire for the life founded on a supernatural motive, together with the resolution to strive to fulfil its obligations. This supernatural motive may take many forms. It may be the wish to avoid peril to salvation, to avoid risk of sin, to help others to serve God, to show gratitude by making the most perfect use of the faculties that God has given; these, and the wish to atone by penance for one's own sins and the sins of the world, and so to have a share in the work of Christ, are amongst the most common. A desire of the life founded on natural motives alone is no mark of vocation, but it may well exist along with the supernatural desire and will not necessarily vitiate

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it; and the case is by no means uncommon where the supernatural desire is present in company with a strong natural repugnance, and if such vocations are followed the result is often most excellent.

616. *Recapitulation.*—In this long chapter we have seen as much as it seemed possible to say respecting the distribution of grace. Grace is a wholly gratuitous gift, which, however, God in His bounty gives to all men in such measure as is needed to put salvation within the reach of all, whether directly or at least indirectly, by giving supernatural value to prayer. The nature, duty, and effects of prayer in its various forms were explained, and a few remarks were made on the subject of the grace of vocation to religion.

We have not touched on the question why grace is given to some persons in such measure that they do not use it, so that though sufficient it is not efficacious. It has already been pointed out that the inequality observable in the distribution of God's gifts is a mystery beyond our powers to understand (n. 388), and this remark applies to interior grace no less than to such exterior graces as Christian education and what is called a character naturally averse from evil.

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CHAPTER IV.

GRACE AND FREE-WILL.

617. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the present chapter we shall first give some explanations as to the nature of Free-Will, and then proceed to prove the Catholic doctrine that man has liberty in the fullest sense, so as to be master of his actions and morally responsible, even when acting under the influence of grace; this truth has been assumed in all passages where we have spoken of the distinction of sufficient grace and efficacious grace (n. 583, &c.), and it will now be proved from Scripture. We shall then proceed to give some account of the famous controversy that divides the theologians of the Church concerning the mode in which the presence of grace in the soul is to be reconciled with liberty: we shall find that the opinions current upon this matter are closely parallel to those which are held by different schools as to the Divine Foreknowledge, for this too seems to some minds inconsistent with liberty in the creature. We shall be content with stating the various views held, without attempting to go far into the arguments adduced in their support.

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618. *Liberty.*—Liberty or freedom in general signifies the absence of some imperfection, as when a town is free from infectious disease; but the most important use of the word is that wherein it refers to the will of man, or of pure spirits, and then it has a negative force, implying the absence both of compulsion and of necessity. It seems obvious that there is no true liberty and responsibility, where the act has been done under necessity, so that Pope St. Pius V. was justified in condemning two propositions of Baius that taught the contrary: "Nothing but violence is inconsistent with man's natural liberty," and "Man sins and even incurs condemnation in that which he does under necessity." (Propp. 66, 67; Denz. 946, 947.) But there is also a positive element in liberty, and it is that prerogative of the power of the soul, called the will, by which under the guidance of the light of the intellect and after consideration of various alternatives, when all is ready for it to act, it is able to do the act or to refrain from doing it; or, to change the phrase, by virtue of which it can choose between two courses: and which is therefore called indifference.

There are three aspects under which indifference may be viewed. Objective indifference is when an object comes before the intellect which sees in it something that is good but does not regard it as necessary to happiness; such a good as this puts no necessity upon the will. Passive indifference is in the will when there is nothing determining it one way or the other; while active indifference is the will when it exercises dominion over its acts.

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The essential freedom of the will does not include the opportunity of doing that which we will, but it consists in the faculty of determining our choice; and this faculty is found wherever there is liberty, more or less perfectly according to circumstances, as will be explained directly. There may be physical liberty in regard of an act which is unlawful, and then we say that the liberty is subject to a moral restraint. The physical liberty to commit sin is no perfection of the will, but is an imperfection, for sin is a recession from God in whom is all good. The just man will exercise his will in such a manner as to adhere to God, and this independently of any law putting moral constraint upon him, which consideration explains the doctrine of St. Paul that the law is not made for the just man, but for the unjust and disobedient (1 Timothy i. 9), and that where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty. (2 Cor. iii. 17.) The just man and friend of God would not wish to murder or rob, even though the Decalogue had never been given; and the fact that the law binds him is no constraint, hindering him from doing what he wishes.

Though this power of self-determination is the essential character of liberty, and common to all forms of it, yet it admits of various grades of perfection. Those angels and men whose time of probation comes to an end at an instant when they have the guilt of unforgiven actual sin, have power of choice between one evil object and another, but cannot choose what is not evil, for they are wholly averse to God, the Fount of all good. (St. Thomas,

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Summa, p. 1. q. 64. a. 2.) Man in his present state, and considered as not aided by grace, has his liberty shackled, but not destroyed: concupiscence puts him under urgent temptation to sin, and he will yield to it from time to time (n. 598), although by great and painful exertion he might refrain; he is free and responsible, but will certainly use his freedom amiss. But man is not left without grace, for he receives what is needed to make it possible for him to keep the law (n. 597); concupiscence therefore does not exert the same control over him, and his liberty is more perfect than that of a man destitute of grace. The liberty of Adam before his sin was more perfect still, for he was not subject to concupiscence (n. 485), nor to ignorance, which does so much to blind the judgment of his descendants. For the most perfect liberty of which a creature is capable, we must look to the state of glory, where the blessed spirits have the clear sight of God, in virtue of the supernatural light which is vouchsafed them; having then a true vision of all that is good they cannot choose evil, so that they are delivered from the possibility of falling into the slavery of sin. God's knowledge of Himself as being all good implies that He enjoys the highest liberty of all.

619. *Freedom under Grace.*—We have shown (n. 583, vii.) that every human act has its beginning in indeliberate motions, and is completed when the will by a deliberate act either assents to the suggestion or rejects it: also (n. 593) that no act is salutary unless it is influenced by elevating grace throughout its course. It follows that a salutary

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act is not to be ascribed to free-will alone, nor to grace alone, but that free-will and grace are jointly the principle from which the act proceeds. This is expressed by the Council of Trent, which teaches (Sess. 6, cap. 5; Denz. 679) that by the stirring and helping grace of God, men freely assenting to this grace and co-operating with it are disposed to their justification: so that when God touches the heart of man by the light of the Holy Spirit, the man is not wholly inactive in receiving this inspiration, for he is able to reject it, and yet without the grace of God he is unable by his free-will to move himself towards justice in the Divine sight.

We gather the truth of this doctrine from the exhortations found in Scripture, where sinners are exhorted not to receive the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. vi. 1.) St. Augustine constantly insists that to become pleasing in God's eyes, prayer is not enough unless at the same time our will be exerted (*De Pecc. Merit. et Remiss.* 2, 5, 5; *P.L.* 44, 153); and the same holy Doctor lays it down as a general principle that the action of our will which had no place in our creation is nevertheless needed for our justification. (Serm. 169, c. 11, n. 13; *P.L.* 38, 923.)

We must, in fact, regard grace as giving to the will a new faculty, not of a higher degree, but of a higher order, enabling it to do acts having a proportion with the supernatural end of man; but so that the possession of this faculty is effectless unless it is exerted. The matter may be illustrated by considering a child as being unable to move some

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large stone. As years go by, the child grows to manhood, and gains the needful strength, but the stone will remain unmoved unless the man choose to apply himself to the task of moving it. It must be carefully observed, however, that this illustration is imperfect, for the child has at least the beginnings of the strength by which the man achieves his task. We may notice how well this doctrine agrees with what St. Paul says of himself: "By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace in me has not been void, but I have laboured more abundantly than all they; yet not I, but the grace of God with me." (1 Cor. xv. 10.) The salutary act proceeds from the grace of God and the will of man as one principle.

620. *Dissent to Grace.*—We now come to one of the principal questions which are in controversy between the Catholic Church on the one hand, and the more characteristic sects of Protestants, together with the Jansenists, on the other. By the more characteristic Protestant sects we mean all those that on this matter follow the teaching either of Luther or of Calvin. These include the bulk of the Protestants of Germany, France, Switzerland, and Scotland: and the same principles are professed in England by all the Methodists, Independents, and Baptists, as well as by the Low Church section of the members of the Established Church: the High and Broad sections, so far as they recognize the necessity of grace at all—an important limitation—are probably in substantial agreement with the Catholic Church. What is said of England is true

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of Protestants in all countries where English is spoken. Jansenius followed the heretical teaching on this point.

The question is, in short, whether grace is ever given which is sufficient, in the sense that we have explained, but is not efficacious. (nn. 583, 585.) This is affirmed by the Church, but denied by the heretics. These admit that grace is sometimes given which is not used, but they hold that in these cases the grace is such as not to put it in the power of the man to use it; and to this mockery of grace the name of sufficient grace has been given, in spite of its acknowledged insufficiency. This deceptive use of a word has been the cause of much confusion.

The defined doctrine of the Church is set forth by the Council of Trent (Sess. 6, can. 4; Denz. 696): If any one say that the free-will of man when moved and stirred by God does not co-operate by its assent to the stirring and calling of God, so as to dispose and prepare itself for obtaining the grace of justification, and that it cannot dissent, if it please, but like an inanimate object it does nothing and remains merely passive, let him be anathema. (n. 494.) The second of the propositions in which the teaching of Jansenius is summed up runs thus: In the state of lapsed nature, resistance is never offered to interior grace. This proposition is condemned as heretical. It was in fact inconsistent with what had already been defined in the passage just quoted from the Council of Trent; but the Jansenists endeavoured to make a distinction by remarking that the Council taught that free-will

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could dissent, if it pleased, but did not teach that it could please. This quibble needs only to be stated to be refuted.

The proof of the doctrine of the Church is found in the passages of Scripture which speak of a sinner turning himself to God (Zach. i. 3; Psalm cxviii. 112), and exhort him to exercise himself unto godliness (1 Timothy iv. 7); these show that the will has some active part in the work of preparing for justification. With fear and trembling we are to work out our salvation (Philipp. ii. 12); and when the will acts it may abstain, if it please; for the man is praised who could have transgressed and has not transgressed (Ecclus. xxxi. 10); and he that has determined on good, being steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, is said to have power over his own will. (1 Cor. vii. 37.)

These passages seem to be clear, and the interpretation that we give to them has the support of tradition, for the Reformers admitted that what they called the true doctrine had lain hid for many centuries. In many matters they make much of the authority of St. Augustine, so that it may be worth while to recall the words of this Saint already quoted by us (n. 619), which plainly show his mind that the will remains free even under the influence of grace.

It is a perfectly true remark that men are not to be held responsible for the consequences that seem to their adversaries to follow logically from their principles. We are far therefore from attributing disregard of the moral law to all who hold the

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doctrine which we have been combating; but we may say that we find it hard to understand how this law receives support from the religion which teaches that if a man sins, this very fact proves him to have lacked the grace without which he could not do his duty.

Luther and the rest profess to find their doctrine in Scripture, and they quote a series of passages of which we will give one specimen; this may suffice, for the others admit of the same explanation. (See Ezech. xxxvi. 26; Philipp. ii. 13.) We choose the words of our Lord, recorded by St. John (vi. 44): "No man can come to Me unless the Father who hath sent Me draw him." It is argued that when anything is drawn, this thing does not co-operate in the work, but either it is purely passive or it resists. The answer is supplied by the comment of St. Augustine, that drawing may have different characters according to the nature of the thing drawn. (Tr. 26, *In Joan.* nn. 4—7; *P.L.* 35, 1607.) A lamb is drawn to follow the shepherd who holds out a tempting wisp of grass, as truly as a cart is drawn by the horse; yet the lamb takes an active part in the work, while the cart is purely inactive. If the Scripture speaks of sinners as dead and buried until they are recalled to live by grace, the reference is to no more than spiritual death, for natural life remains; and if this were gone, grace would have nothing to act on.

Certain passages of St. Augustine, occurring in his works against the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians, will be found on examination to teach no more than

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that God infallibly foresees what will be the result of the grace He gives, and what would be the result in case He pleased to give grace in some other measure. (n. 379.) There are other passages which are forced to do service in the controversy only by confounding what God can do by the exercise of His power with what He does do by supplying grace to a free creature.

It will be seen that our argument applies equally whether we are opposing Luther and Calvin, who denied that man had any free-will; or whether we think of the assertion that grace compels a man to will to do a particular act. A will compelled to one course is no will at all; yet this is the nonentity which Jansenius invented, in order to seem not to be openly opposed to the Tridentine definition.

621. *The Action of Grace.*—It is now our business to give such an account, as is possible within our limits, of the famous controversy as to the mode of action of grace, which has for three centuries been freely agitated in the Catholic schools. Although it directly concerns grace, yet it is closely connected with the subject of Predestination and kindred matters, dealt with in our chapters on the Knowledge and Will of God (nn. 376—391), to which the reader is referred.

All the schools concerned in this controversy are Catholic, and therefore hold that no salutary act can be done by man except under the influence of grace (n. 591); and that man influenced by grace acts freely. (n. 619.) The difficulty is to discover a mode of reconciling these two undoubted truths.

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We will very briefly indicate some of the best-known systems.

I. *Thomism.* — The school founded by Bañez (n. 381), which claims to rest on the authority of St. Thomas, represents that there are two species of grace, the one of which is given more abundantly than the other. To the first the much-abused name of sufficient grace (n. 583, viii.) is given: this makes it possible for a man to do the salutary act, but if no more be given he will not use the grace offered. But so often as, in virtue of a Divine decree of premotion (n. 371), the act is to be done, then the second kind of grace is given, and the act is done under its influence; for which reason it is said to be efficacious. Billuart is the leading supporter of this view.

II. *Augustinianism.*—Berti may be named as the representative of a school which professes a special devotion to the doctrine of St. Augustine. These represent grace as producing its effect by causing the act to come before the mind in so attractive a shape that the will infallibly but freely assents to it.

III. *Molinism.*—In direct opposition to these, is the doctrine which attracted attention when put forward by Molina. (n. 371.) This writer held the view which we have followed in our account of sufficient and efficacious grace (n. 583, viii.): God by His *Scientia Media* (n. 379) knows what will or would be the conduct of His free creature in every combination of circumstances, and therefore, having decreed what grace He will give to a particular man on a particular occasion, He knows whether that

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man will use the grace or whether he will reject it. In cases where the man rejects the grace and sins, he has by his free rejection made the grace which was truly sufficient be inefficacious; if he had freely chosen to use it, he would have made this same grace to be efficacious. In case the grace is rejected, God knows that there is a certain higher degree of grace which that same man in the same circumstances would have used; why this higher degree is not given in every instance is a part of the unfathomed mystery of the inequality with which God distributes His gratuitous favours. (n. 388.)

IV. *Congruism.*—Suarez agrees with Molina in recognizing the part played by *Scientia Media* in the distribution of grace: but he differs in holding that the grace which accompanies a salutary act has its efficacy from this, that it has a certain congruity with the circumstances of the person to whom it is given, so that it infallibly produces its effect. Most Jesuit theologians follow either Molina or Suarez.

V. *Syncretism.*—It will be seen that a fundamental difference exists between the Thomist and Augustinian views on the one hand, and those of Molina and Suarez on the other. An attempt has been made to fuse these two into one system, to which the name of Syncretism has been given; this name is Greek and signifies mixing. This system is upheld in various forms by the Jesuit Petavius, and by Thomassin, Cardinal Noris, and St. Alphonsus Liguori. They teach that there are two kinds of actual grace; one which, like the grace of the Thomists, inevitably draws with it the consent of

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the will; the other which becomes efficacious through the free consent of the will, as Molina explains. These writers think that, according to the ordinary course of God's providence, the second sort of grace is alone given for occasions of small moment, but so that if more difficult works are to be done, the first kind of grace is supplied.

It is impossible for us to go into the arguments that have been brought forward in favour of each of these systems or against them. They all agree in this that they are consistent with Catholic doctrine, for the Thomist no less than the Molinist teaches that the will acts freely in every salutary act, and thus repudiates the Calvinist heresy; and the Molinist no less than the Thomist maintains the absolute necessity of grace both for the beginning of every salutary act and for its whole progress, and thus cannot be justly charged with any form of Pelagianism.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, both Thomists and their adversaries endeavoured to procure a decision of the Holy See upon the question between them; but no final result was come to, further than this that in 1606 Pope Paul V. decreed that each party was at liberty to teach their doctrine, but forbade each to condemn the other. This decree is still binding, and the matter is still freely under discussion.

622. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has described the nature of the liberty of will that man enjoys in various circumstances; after which it is proved that the action of grace does not destroy free-will, and

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that even when grace is offered it may be rejected, should the will so please. Lastly, a short sketch is given of the different views that have been held on the difficult question of the mode in which grace acts, which is closely connected with some points as to Divine foreknowledge of free acts and as to the distribution of grace, which were the main subjects of earlier chapters of this work.

623. *Close of the Treatise.*—The matter of almost the whole of this Treatise is known by revelation alone, and the greater part of it is defined doctrine. The subject of grace has filled a large place in the theological literature of the last three hundred and fifty years, because the heresies of Luther and Calvin turned in part upon an exaggerated view of the necessity of supernatural aid, if salvation is to be attained. St. Thomas found no occasion to devote much space to the subject, which is discussed in four questions of the First Division of the Second Part of the *Summa.* (1. 2. qq. 109—112.) He places grace amongst the external principles of human acts. One of these principles is Satan, who infests us with his temptations (p. 1. q. 111.); another is found in the aid that God gives us by His law (1. 2. qq. 90—108.), which teaches us our duty; while another is grace, which helps us to perform it. The internal principles of human acts are found in the powers of the soul and its habits. (1. 2. q. 49. pr.)

In the ordinary course of God's providence, grace is given as the fruit of prayer. It therefore seemed not out of place to introduce in this Treatise

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some remarks on this very practical subject. In strictness, the consideration of prayer belongs to Moral Theology (n. 4) and not to Dogma: for its exercise is an act of the virtue of religion, one of the parts annexed to the cardinal virtue of Justice, and therefore it has its place among other particular acts of man, in the Second Division of the same Second Part. (2. 2. q. 83.)

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Treatise the Fourteenth.

JUSTIFICATION.

CHAPTER I.

REQUISITES OF JUSTIFICATION.

624. *Plan of the Treatise.*—We have explained (n. 184) that by the Just are meant all men whose spiritual state is such that should death come to them they would attain the eternal happiness which is found in the sight of God. Also, the Catholic Church, in common with the great bulk of Christians, holds that men are not in this state at the instant of their conception (n. 493), so that if they attain it at all, the change must be wrought at some instant between conception and death. The change is known as Justification, or that which makes the man just; or, to use an equivalent phrase, which takes him out of the state of sin and puts him into the state of grace. We shall see (n. 636) that this forgiveness does not stand alone, but is accompanied by interior renewal. Some sects of Protestants hold that the state of grace once attained can never be lost; others agree with the Catholic Church in holding that it is lost if mortal sin be committed

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(n. 640), and that having been lost it can be regained at any time before death. (n. 635.) Also, some sects hold that the state of grace to which a man is introduced when he is justified does not admit of being greater or less: others, with the Catholic Church, hold that the friendship of the man with God does admit of increased closeness. (n. 638.)

It will readily be understood that the belief held by a person on the question whether the friendship of God, once acquired, can ever be lost, most profoundly affects the whole of his view of his relation to his Creator and his fellow-men, and it is hard for either party to enter into the feelings of the other: and the difference is all the greater because the Lutheran asserts that one who is in the state of grace knows with infallible certainty that he is in this state, whereas the Catholic holds that this knowledge is not granted, unless exceptionally, by special revelation. (n. 639.) No discussion on the deeper questions of religion will be profitable unless each party knows what is the mind of the other on these controversies.

In the present Treatise we shall speak in successive chapters on the Requisites of Justification; on its Nature; on some of its effects, especially the infusion of habits of virtue; and on merit which attaches to the actions of the Just.

We shall, throughout, omit the consideration of the condition of infants, for whose justification provision is made by the Sacrament of Baptism. (n. 696.)

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625. *Subject of the Chapter.* — In the present chapter, we shall state more particularly the Catholic doctrine and the leading forms of the views held by the followers of Luther and Calvin on the subject of Justification: after which we shall prove from Scripture and reason that faith, in the sense in which we have defined it, is necessary to Justification, but that it is not sufficient by itself.

626. *The Catholic Doctrine.*—We shall borrow a short statement of the rival tenets as to justification from the *Symbolik* of Dr. Moehler. This noble work of a Munich professor appeared in 1833, and contains an exact though summary statement of the teaching of the Catholic Church and of all the leading Protestant sects upon every branch of Dogmatic Theology. The statement is in every instance derived from the authoritative books of the particular religious body, and it is from this circumstance that Dr. Moehler's work derives its name. This name has nothing to do with what is commonly understood by symbolism, but it is derived from the fact that in many languages, as sometimes in English, the word symbol has the same meaning as creed. The etymological meaning of *symbol* is *contribution* (*σύν, βάλλω*), and its theological use is perhaps derived from the tradition that the Apostles' Creed was composed by the Apostles at the beginning of their world-wide preaching, when each of the twelve contributed an article before starting for his allotted province. (n. 245.)

The *Symbolik* has been translated into English and many other languages. Its manner of discussing

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its subject is most attractive to such readers as wish to make an earnest study of the questions agitated among Christians.

The Catholic doctrine on justification is exhibited as follows. We shall have occasion hereafter to quote the words in which the Council of Trent declares each point.

It is a work of the mercy of God alone that fallen man was raised again to the possibility of gaining a supernatural end. Man learns the truth that he is called to this end when the preaching of the Church falls upon his ear, and this exterior grace is accompanied by the interior action of the Holy Ghost, which rouses his spiritual faculties from the sleep of death in which they are plunged. This action urges him to put forth his powers, and co-operate with the grace offered him, so as to embrace the new life. If he listens to the kindly voice and follows the impulse so mercifully given, the first effect of the co-operation of the two powers is faith in the word of God which has been spoken to him. He believes, with a certainty that nothing can shake, the truths and promises that are revealed to him, and especially he is moved by the knowledge of the love of God, in giving His only Son for the redemption of the world. Then, comparing his actual state with what God would have him to be, he learns with how great reason he should fear the Divine justice, and so throws himself on the mercy of God, in hope that through Jesus Christ he will obtain favour. This hope, and the thought of the boundless goodness that has been extended

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to him, engenders in him a certain love of God and a certain detestation of sin, and he repents. In this way, by the operation of grace and the co-operation of free-will, the way is prepared for justification; and, provided the man puts no obstacle in the way, the Holy Spirit works this justification by remitting his sins, and, more than this, sanctifies him by pouring charity into his soul. Thenceforth, cleansed from stain and interiorly renewed, he begins to live a new life, returns to the right path, observes the commandments, does good works, performs acts pleasing to God, and so, advancing from justice to justice, he becomes by the merits of his Saviour an heir of the Kingdom of Heaven. At the same time, he has no certainty of salvation, unless a particular revelation is vouchsafed to him.

627. *The Lutheran Doctrine.*—We will now give an account of the doctrine of the followers of Luther upon the same subject. We take this from Moehler, who derives it from books which are regarded as authoritative by the sect. When a sinner has been thrown into an agony of apprehension by the preaching of the Christian law, he learns the consoling news that Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. With heart full of fear and terror he lays hold of the merits of the Cross, by means of the faith which alone justifies. On account of the satisfaction offered by Him who has paid the penalty for our iniquities, God reputes him innocent although he remains guilty. The Sovereign Judge screens him from punishment, but

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his original sin remains in his soul. However, although it is faith that justifies, yet this faith is followed by good works, and justification is completed by sanctification. But it is important to observe that these two things are independent, and form distinct acts in the process of regeneration; for otherwise no one could have certainty of the pardon of his sins and of his eternal salvation, which certainty is an essential quality of Christian faith. Justification is the work of the Creator alone, in which the creature has no part whatever, not even co-operating with grace, and thus the glory belongs to God alone.

628. *The Calvinist Doctrine.*—The doctrine on justification, which the Calvinistic sects find in the *Institutes* of their leader, differs from that of Luther in two points. Calvin does not admit that fear aroused by the preaching of the law precedes faith which leads to repentance. He teaches that the thought of the mercy of God touches the heart of the sinner, and leads him to hate his sins, and so to pass to faith and repentance. The other point concerns predestination. Calvin, as we have seen (n. 390, iv.), taught that God has from eternity fixed unchangeably the destiny of each man, and the Divine action that leads to justification is exercised on the elect alone.

Lutheran doctrine has its stronghold in Germany, its native country, and it prevails among some sections of the Episcopalians and Methodists in the countries where English is spoken. The rest of the sects that we have mentioned (n. 620) as denying

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the co-existence of liberty and grace, incline to the Calvinist view, and disputes between the rival parties are carried on with no little warmth.

We proceed to our task of proving that the Catholic doctrine is the teaching of revelation.

629. *Saving Faith.*—That faith of some sort is a necessary requisite before justification is plainly taught in Scripture, and is admitted by all Christians. St. Paul teaches that without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews xi. 6); He that believeth not shall be condemned (St. Mark xvi. 16); He that believeth not is already judged, because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. (St. John iii. 18.) But the question, what is meant by faith, lies at the very root of the matter which we are endeavouring to explain. The Council of Trent (Sess. 6, can. 12; Denz. 704) condemns those who say that faith which justifies is nothing but confidence in the mercy of God, whereby sin is remitted through Christ, or that it is by this confidence alone that we are justified. The Lutherans distinguish three sorts of faith: the faith through which miracles are wrought (St. Matt. xvii. 19); historical faith, by which we believe the doctrines and other truths that are revealed; and faith in the promises that the sins of men in general, or of the particular individual, are for Christ's sake not imputed. They ascribe the justification of each man to this last faith.

The Council of Trent, in the same Sixth Session, not only rejects the Lutheran doctrine, but declares the true nature of saving faith: it is that whereby

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we believe all that God has revealed, and especially that a sinner is justified by the grace of God through the redemption wrought by Christ. (cap. 6; Denz. 680.) If the passages of Holy Scripture where mention is made of saving faith are compared, it becomes clear that the Council expresses the doctrine of the New Testament. We had occasion to discuss these passages in our first volume (nn. 310, 311), when we saw that faith signifies belief in revealed truth, and has nothing specially to do with Lutheran confidence. The faith mentioned in Scripture is mainly an act of the intellect, whereas confidence belongs to the will. It will be enough in this place to point out how directly our doctrine flows from a few verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews (x. 38—xi. 7.) In this place, St. Paul is speaking of the faith by which the just man lives (x. 38), and without which it is impossible to please God. (xi. 6.) This faith inclines men to recognize such truths of revelation as the framing of the world by the Word of God (xi. 3); and its fruit is fear (xi. 7), a disposition the very opposite of confidence. The Lutherans will avow that the explanation of faith given by them was unheard of in the Church for fourteen centuries, and we now see that it cannot be supported from Holy Scripture.

630. *Necessity of Faith.*—As we have said (n. 629), there is general agreement among Christians that faith is in some sense necessary to justification, and we have shown that this faith is the disposition to believe all that God has revealed. We must now consider what is the nature of this necessity. There

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are two senses in which compliance with some condition may be said to be necessary for the attainment of an object. Sometimes the connection between the condition and the event depends wholly upon the will of a superior, with whom it lies to order the matter; sometimes this connection arises from the nature of the event, independently of any determination of a free-will. The first sort is called necessity of precept, and it has place only when one person puts a constraint upon the will of another, by requiring him to conduct himself in a particular way. Thus, the master of a household gives orders that the horses are to be fed at a particular time, and thus puts a necessity of precept on the servants: the servant who supplies the corn at some other time, neglects the precept, and objectively does wrong: but if he was innocently ignorant of the order that had been given there was no subjective wrong; his ignorance excused him. This necessity of precept must now be contrasted with the necessity which sometimes requires the use of particular means. This is not regarded as depending upon the will of any superior, and we can speak of it in regard to irrational or inanimate objects as well as in the case of persons: and nothing depends on the question whether or not the necessity was or was not known to those concerned. We may recur to the illustration just given, and we see that if the feeding of the horses be totally neglected they will die; and this will happen equally whether the groom knew that the horses were in the stable, or knew nothing of their

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existence. Food is a necessary means for the preservation of life; not necessary merely because of a precept.

A means is said to be morally necessary when the effect can be attained without it, but only with great difficulty: thus, a carriage is morally necessary to a traveller who would find it possible, but very difficult, to perform the journey on foot. That means is physically necessary which is required by the laws of nature, as food for the support of life; this necessity can be dispensed with by miracle. But no miracle can dispense when the necessity arises from the intrinsic nature of things, as for instance, that an effect be accompanied by a cause, as the metaphysically necessary means of its existence: from the nature of things, there cannot be an effect without a cause.

This distinction of physical and metaphysical necessity in the order of nature has its analogue in the supernatural order. There are certain laws by which the dispensation of God's grace ordinarily follows, but from which a deviation may be made, if God please to confer a special privilege, such as is equivalent to a miracle in the physical order: an instance would be found if one who is under original sin were justified without receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, in fact or in desire; which Sacrament, as we shall see, is ordinarily required. There are other cases of necessity in the supernatural order where the nature of the matter excludes the possibility of a privilege. Thus, many hold that no privilege could dispense with

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the necessity of faith as a condition of justification in adults: for there can be no supernatural love of God unless He is known by faith, and without this love there can be no justification: though others think that an explicit wish to know God in a more perfect way may be a sufficient disposition for grace.

When a person is bound to attain a certain end, he is at the same time bound to use the necessary means; so that every man is under a precept of forming some act of faith, for this is the necessary means of attaining justification and salvation, as we shall show directly. Pope Innocent XI. therefore, in 1679, rightly condemned the doctrine that there is no special and peculiar precept of faith. (Prop. 16; Denz. 1033.) That faith is necessary as a means is clearly taught in many places of Scripture, of which it will be enough to quote the precise declaration of St. Paul. Writing to the Galatian Christians, in whom he discerned an inclination to ascribe to the observance of the Mosaic law a virtue which it did not possess, the Apostle says, "Knowing that man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith of Jesus Christ; we also believe in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; because by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified." (Galat. ii. 16; see also Hebrews xi.) This doctrine is taught by the Council of Trent when it declares that no man ever was justified without faith (Sess. 6, cap. 7), and again that faith is the beginning of the salvation of man, the foundation and root of all justification.

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(*Ibid.* cap. 8; Denz. 681, 683.) The Council of the Vatican inculcates the doctrine in almost the same words, and adds that no man will attain eternal life unless he not only have faith, but persevere in that faith to the end. (Sess. 3, cap. 3, *De Fide;* Denz. 1642.) If it be objected to this doctrine that it makes salvation impossible to the mass of men, whose ears are never reached by the preaching of the Christian revelation, we reply that God will not fail to aid those who do what they can, for He does not command impossibilities. (n. 606.) The objector need not be listened to until he produces a case where the hardship that he speaks of has actually occurred: and it need not be said that this is beyond his power. (See nn. 614, 694.)

631. *The Object of Faith.*—By the Object of Faith we understand that truth which is believed; and since the necessity of faith to salvation has been established it is obviously most interesting to know how far this faith must extend; what is the object of this faith. Before this question can be answered we must explain an easy but important distinction, for faith may be either implicit or explicit. These words, according to their Latin origin, mean respectively "wrapped up," and "displayed;" and we may illustrate them by reference to a tradesman, who unrolls a bale of goods and sets them in good order upon his counter. The word "involved" also has the meaning of "wrapped up:" and we may say that a man may know some truth and believe it, and extend his belief to all that

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is involved in this truth, even though he does not know what may be involved in it: he has explicit belief in the truth, and he believes implicitly all that it contains. A student who applies himself to a new language obtains a trustworthy dictionary, and he believes implicitly that all the words of the language bear the meanings which this book assigns to them: when he opens the book, and sees the meaning of some word, his belief that the word has this meaning becomes explicit.

This distinction combined with that between necessity of precept and necessary means shows that our question as to the object of faith is fourfold. Two of the branches are easily answered, for it is evident that implicit belief in all that God has revealed is required both by precept and as a disposition the absence of which is inconsistent with Divine friendship: and in fact faith in a single truth founded on the authority of God who makes the revelation necessarily implies belief in all to which the same motive extends, that is, in all revelation.

The extent of the precept of explicit belief, binding all men as far as they are capable of performing it, is not to be learned from any formal document, but is to be gathered from the Catechisms and other works of divines who are guided by the practice of the Church. All Christians ought to believe explicitly that the one God exists in three Persons, that He is Creator of the world, and that He rewards and punishes men after their death according to their deeds. They must believe that

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Christ is the Son of God made Man, born of His Mother without having any man for His father: that He suffered and died for us, rose again, and passed to Heaven; and that He will return in glory to judge mankind. Further, he must believe that Christ established on earth one Church under one visible Head; which Church is guided by the Holy Spirit, and is our infallible guide in matters of faith and morals.

Further, we may mention that all Christians who have the opportunity are bound to know the precepts of the Decalogue and the chief precepts of the Church; also, certain matters concerning the Sacraments, and at least the substance of the Lord's Prayer. The knowledge of these things must be accompanied by a certain amount of explicit faith. We must refer to the Moralists for detail on this subject.

Regarding the points on which explicit knowledge is required as the indispensable means of justification, this certainly extends to the belief that God exists and that He shows Himself the Rewarder of them that seek Him. This amount of belief is declared by St. Paul to be essential, if any one will please God. (Hebrews xi. 6, where the word γίνεται is to be observed.) The Greek word translated Rewarder (μισθαποδότης) means literally the payer of wages: the "seeking" God is therefore the application to enter His service; and the absolute necessity of the knowledge specified will be readily understood, if any one is to earn a reward.

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So far there is universal agreement, and in fact the necessity that we have stated is not open to doubt, for Pope Innocent XI. condemned the assertion that explicit belief that God rewards is not necessary. (Prop. 22; Denz. 1039.) There is a controversy whether St. Paul, in the passage quoted, intended to mention all that is necessary, or whether explicit belief in the Trinity and Incarnation is required. At one time, a few writers were found to maintain that this explicit belief not only is necessary, but always has been so: this is now held by no one, but many followers of the Thomist school hold that it has been necessary since the revelation was brought by Christ, although under the Old Law it was not requisite. These found their opinion upon the language of Scripture, which frequently speaks of faith in Christ as the essential condition of salvation; and to believe in Christ means to believe that He is God and Man. But the passages in question may be understood of the necessity of precept, which binds those to whom the truth is proposed; or they may indicate that faith in God the Rewarder avails only because of the merits of Christ. It therefore seems to Suarez and the large majority of recent theologians that the necessity of this explicit belief is not established: and they find great difficulty in supposing that the coming of Christ made the conditions of salvation harder for the great bulk of mankind who never hear the preaching of the Gospel.

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632. *Faith alone not sufficient.*—It has been seen (n. 626) that according to Catholic doctrine faith is necessary to justification, but that faith alone is not sufficient: other dispositions are needed. This is expressed by the Council of Trent when it condemns (Sess. 6, can. 9; Denz. 701) those who say that a sinner is justified by faith alone, in the sense that nothing else is required to co-operate in the work of gaining grace, and that there is no necessity for the sinner to be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will. It may seem strange that the doctrine here condemned should ever have been held by any one who professed to draw his religion from the Bible; for nothing is more clear than that the Holy Scripture requires that a sinner should turn to God and do penance. This is taught in express terms by our Lord Himself, when He warned His audience, that unless they did penance they should perish (St. Luke xiii. 3): and the Apostles were true to their Master's teaching, for they who gave heed to the first sermon preached in the Catholic Church by the first Pope, were warned to do penance and be baptized for the remission of their sins. (Acts ii. 38.) This necessity was no new revelation brought by Christ, for it was familiar to the prophets. Ezechiel tells us that when the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness which he hath wrought, and doeth judgment and justice, he shall save his soul alive. (xviii. 27.) Turn ye to Me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn to you, saith the Lord of hosts. (Zach. i. 3.) These hortatory passages

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are sufficiently clear, but perhaps the doctrine is still more forcibly taught in the parable which sets forth the hearty welcome which awaits the sinner who will do his part to return to God. If the prodigal son (St. Luke xv. 11—24) had remained in the far country, content with believing that his father's house was open to him, he would never have been clad with the first robe, nor would he have been feasted on the fatted calf. A sinner must do more than believe if he is to receive the robe of charity and partake of the Blessed Eucharist.

The doctrine of justification by faith only is at the foundation of the whole structure of the Lutheran system, and we have shown that it is not the doctrine of the Gospel. We may remark that it would be strange were it otherwise, for Christ came in order that we might be able to serve God in holiness and justice all our days (St. Luke i. 74, 75), which is something beyond believing that our sins are forgiven.

The inventors of the solifidian doctrine, as it was called (*solus*, *fides*), were misled by certain expressions where St. Paul points out that faith, and not works, are required for justification. The Apostle had frequent occasion to insist on this truth, but it may suffice to quote one of the plainest of these passages: "We account a man to be justified by faith without the works of the law." (Romans iii. 28.) But this and the others to the same effect are seen to be nothing to the purpose when it is remembered that the whole of this and other Epistles of St. Paul are directed against the

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error to which some converts from Judaism pertinaciously clung, that the observance of the Law of Moses was the divinely appointed means of salvation for all mankind. Circumcision was the principal "work" that the Apostle had in mind, as is seen plainly in the verse following that which has just been quoted, and this notoriously stood for the whole Jewish law (Galat. v. 3); and were it otherwise, the writer would contradict himself, for he assures us that not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law are justified (Romans ii. 13); and man may have faith, but if he have not charity he is nothing. (1 Cor. xiii. 2; see n. 594.) The doctrine that justification is due to faith alone, without the works of the moral law, is sometimes called Antinomianism. (*ἀντί, νόμος.*)

The doctrine taught in the Epistle of St. James is avowedly in harmony with that of the Catholic Church, which teaches that "by works a man is justified and not by faith only" (ii. 24); these words do not exclude the part played by faith, but are totally opposed to the Lutheran view. Attempts have been made to exclude the Epistle of St. James from the Protestant canon, solely on account of its doctrine; but we have said enough to show that the exclusion must extend to the Epistles of St. Paul, to the Prophets, and to the Gospels themselves, for all these writings teach harmoniously the doctrine set forth at Trent. This doctrine is the safe guide of commentators who essay the difficult task of commenting fully upon the Epistles which have been quoted.

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633. *Recapitulation.*—The chief subject of this chapter has been the controversy as to the nature of the faith which all hold to be a necessary condition of justification, and which the Catholic Church declares to be the readiness of mind to believe all that God has revealed, together with an explicit belief in certain points; the Lutherans on the other hand explain what they call faith as being the sinner's firm hope that his sins have been lost sight of by God, for the sake of Christ, whose holiness is imputed to the sinner. It has also been shown that other dispositions besides faith are required by the consentient teaching of all parts of the Scripture.

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CHAPTER II.

THE NATURE OF JUSTIFICATION.

634. *Subject of the Chapter.*—Having established the conditions of justification according to the Catholic doctrine, we must proceed to say something more as to the nature of this great gift, and to show that in the justification of a sinner, his sins are wholly taken away, and that the Lutherans are in error when they assert that these sins still exist although God does not impute them to the sinner. We shall show also that when the sin is remitted, the soul also receives the great gift of habitual grace (n. 583, vi.), in virtue of which the man is interiorly renewed and thenceforth may be called by many titles expressive of friendship with God. This habitual grace is lost by grievous sin, but may be regained through the virtue of the Sacrament of Penance. We shall speak in the next chapter of certain gifts of God which come to the soul along with habitual grace.

635. *The Remission of Sin.*—It is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that when God receives a sinner to His friendship, all sin is altogether forgiven and becomes as if it had never been: the Lutherans on the other hand maintain that the sin and its guilt still continue in existence, but that

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God deals with the man as though he had no sin. The point is defined by the Council of Trent when it condemns all who deny that "by the grace of Jesus Christ conferred in Baptism the guilt of original sin is remitted," or who assert that this guilt is "merely not imputed." (Sess. 5, can. 5; Denz. 674.) The Council here speaks of original sin, which is remitted in Baptism along with all actual sin, if the person have any; but what is said applies no less to the remission of post-baptismal sin, which is the work of the Sacrament of Penance. It is not meant that, historically, the forgiven sin has no longer been committed, for God does not alter the past; but that morally, the sin is as if it never had been, for there is no longer in the soul anything that excites the wrath of God, and the stain arising from the absence of sanctifying grace is no longer there. We proceed to give the proof of this doctrine from Scripture.

There are certain inspired texts which speak of sin as being covered, or not imputed. Thus the Psalmist speaks of the blessedness of those whose sins are covered, and to whom the Lord has not imputed sin (Psalm xxxii. 2); and St. Paul quotes this passage as referring to one to whom God reputeth justice without works. (Romans iv. 6.) Similar phrases occur elsewhere (Ezech. xxxiii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 19), and if they stood alone, they might fairly be regarded as expressing the Lutheran view. But we have here a good illustration of the ease with which the meaning of Scripture may be perverted if exclusive regard be had to a single class

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of passages, and it is the glory of Catholic theology that it takes account of all parts of the sacred writings, and gives a consistent meaning to the whole. The sense of the texts just quoted must be such as not to contradict other texts where it is said that sin is taken away (St. John i. 29; 2 Kings xii. 13), removed far away (Psalm cii. 12), blotted out (Acts iii. 19; Isaias xliv. 22), cleansed (Ephes. v. 26; Ezech. xxxvi. 25), washed away (1 Cor. vi. 11), and so forth. After justification, the man is said to be washed, and made white (Isaias i. 18); he has a clean heart (Psalm l. 12); he is healed from his bruises, his wounds, his sickness, freed from his bonds (Romans vi. 22), raised to a new life. (Ephes. ii. 5.) This abundance of images is used by the Holy Spirit to impress upon us the completeness with which the grace of Christ removes sin; it is true that God does not impute forgiven sin, as the Psalmist says (xxxi. 2), but the phrases that we have quoted in such variety are not consistent with the continued existence of the sin.

The Lutheran doctrine is not merely unscriptural, but it is inconsistent with the known attributes of God; for God is holy and cannot but hate the iniquity that He sees; and He cannot fail to see that which exists, for all things are naked and open to His eyes (Hebrews iv. 13); nothing can become covered, so as to evade the Divine glance, except by ceasing to exist.

636. *Inward Renewal.*—It is a peculiarly Calvinistic error, that justification consists in the remission of sin alone, without renewal of the inward man.

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The Council of Trent condemns it in a form which embodies the proof from Scripture of the opposed Catholic doctrine. "If any one say that men are justified by the imputation of the justice of Christ alone, or by the remission of sins alone, apart from grace and charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them; or again that the grace which justifies us is no more than the favour of God, let him be anathema." (n. 494.) This doctrine is taught by St. Paul from whom the Council took the phrase concerning the action of the Holy Ghost (Romans v. 5); it is fully set forth in the Epistle to St. Titus (iii. 5), where it is said that God saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom He poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour: and many other passages are found where justification is described as new birth, by which one dead in sins receives the gift of life; in the words of the Prophet, not merely is the heart of stone taken away, but the heart of flesh is given. (Ezech. xi. 19.)

By this new birth, the sinner becomes truly just, participating in the justice of God. "The one formal cause of justification is the justice of God; not that by which He is just, but by which He makes us just: by the receipt of which gift we are renewed in the spirit of our mind and are not merely reputed just, but are named and actually are just, when we receive justice into ourselves, each according to his measure, which the Holy Ghost imparts to each as He pleases, and according to the

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disposition of each one and his co-operation." Such are the terms in which the Council of Trent (Sess. 6, cap. 7; Denz. 681) opposes that doctrine of of "imputed righteousness," which in one or another of its many varieties finds favour with the followers of Luther and Calvin. The teaching of the Council by no means denies that the justice of Christ has merited justification for us: it merely says that our justice is something different from the justice of our Redeemer.

Our doctrine on this point is so closely connected with the rest of the teaching of the Church on justification as hardly to need a distinct proof; but this proof is found if necessary in the places where St. Paul teaches that Christ came on earth to render us holy and unspotted (Ephes. i. 4), without blemish (v. 27), and the like: this work was certainly accomplished, and therefore those who make the salvation wrought by Christ their own *are* holy, and are not merely reputed holy because of the holiness of Another.

The result of justification is the presence in the soul of something permanent: it does not consist only of a transient grace, or series of transient graces. This follows from the language of Scripture by which it is likened to a new birth, or to the raising of the dead to life: the act of birth or of resuscitation passes in an instant, but its effects remain, for the life which is newly given or restored is permanent: it will remain until destroyed by death; and the same is true of the spiritual life given by Baptism or Penance.

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The doctrine we are maintaining, that habitual grace is something positive and not merely negative, agrees with what the Church teaches, in opposition to Luther and Calvin, that this grace admits of degrees, varying from man to man, and in the same man at different times. (n. 638.)

637. *Effects of Justification.*—(1) First among the effects of justification we put the remission of sin, which extends to all grievous sin, original or actual, the guilt of which is on the soul. Grievous sin is the greatest of evils in the world, but the grace that comes through the merits of Christ to the rightly disposed sinner is so powerful that it destroys in a moment the mass of evil that there is in countless mortal sins, and makes them as if they had never been.

We shall see hereafter what are the necessary conditions for the reception of the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance, by which sinners are justified; among them is the detestation of all mortal sin: it follows that one such sin cannot be remitted, in such manner that the guilt of other sins remains. Nor will venial sin be forgiven to one who is stained with the guilt of mortal sin. But venial sin is forgiven to those who make acts of the virtues opposed to the sin, such as charity or penance, and also to those who receive the Sacraments with due dispositions. There is nothing to prevent the guilt of some venial sins remaining although others are forgiven, and in fact this is what ordinarily happens.

(2) By justification, the sinner is rendered pleasing to God in a special sense. God saw that

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all that He made was good (Genesis i. 31), and He loved the goodness which He saw in creation, but His love for the man whom He has justified has a special character, as for a friend or dear child.

(3) The name justification points to the third effect, that he who has received the favour is rendered just, as we have seen. (n. 637.) By justice is here meant the absence of all sin, every form of which takes from God something that is His due: it is therefore used to embrace more than the cardinal virtue which is specially called justice.

(4) Another effect of justification is to make the soul like to Christ Himself, who is spoken of as beautiful among the sons of men with at least spiritual beauty (Psalm xliv. 3, and see n. 521); this beauty is brought out by the light of grace poured from the Father of lights. (St. James i. 17.) This likeness to Christ is indicated in those places of Scripture where He is called the First-born among many brethren (Romans viii. 29), and there is a natural likeness among brethren. The just are said to put on Christ, Christ is formed in them (Galat. iii. 27, iv. 19); and these phrases obviously express a likeness in the spiritual order.

(5) Since justification imports regeneration, it must involve a new sonship, and this is not a natural sonship, but must be of the sort called adoptive. By adoption is understood the act of taking a stranger in blood and placing him in the position of son, and it is in this way that the just not only are called the sons of God, but are His sons. (1 St. John iii. 1, 2.) This same adoption is

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implied in the position held by the just that they are brethren of Christ (St. John xx. 17): He is the Son of God by nature (n. 533), which cannot be said of any other man: they therefore being His brethren are so by adoption.

(6) Further, it is certain that the just man is in some special sense a partaker of the Divine Nature (2 St. Peter i. 4), and certain words of the Psalmist are believed to point to the same truth: I have said you are gods, and all of you sons of the most High. (Psalm lxxxi. 6.) When the priest, in the course of Mass, is putting the drop of water into the wine of the chalice, he prays that by this mystery of water and wine we may become partakers of the Divinity of Him who deigned to become partaker of our humanity. This participation appears to consist in the just man being an image of God in a fuller sense than is true of the man who is not clothed with the habit of grace (n. 583, vi.); it certainly does not imply a conversion of the man into God in the sense in which the bread of the Holy Sacrifice is converted into the Flesh of Christ. (n. 713.) This was the absurd doctrine maintained by the German mystic Eckhart, about the year 1300 (Denz. 437, &c.); and the Spaniard Molinos (n. 607) was condemned (Prop. 5; Denz. 1092) for teaching that God and the just man are not two things, but one.

(7) The just man is in a peculiar sense the object of the providence of God, for all things work together for his benefit (Romans viii. 28), and the Heavenly Father can no more forget His adopted

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son, than a mother can forget her suckling. (Isaias xlvi. 3.)

(8) He is also the special object of the care of the holy angels (n. 453); these are sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation (Hebrews i. 14), to keep them in all their ways. (Psalm xc. 11.)

(9) Lastly, the gift of habitual grace is an anticipation of Heaven, which is already within the just (St. Luke xvii. 21), for they have received the new birth which is the necessary condition for admittance into the Kingdom of God (St. John iii. 3), and it will remain for ever with those who are happy enough to be clothed with it at the instant that death puts a term to their probation.

The above considerations, and others that might be added, have so impressed theologians that they discuss the question whether the justification of a sinner may not truly be called the grandest of the works of God. It is grander than creation, for creation belongs only to the natural order, whereas justification is a wholly supernatural work; and this is in accord with the words of the sacred Liturgy, where the priest addresses God as marvellous in the creation of man, and yet more marvellous in his redemption: and even the Incarnation is in one respect less than justification, in so far as the means is less than the end. But substantially it is otherwise; for the Word of God is the fount of all justice, from which flow the streams which make glad the soul of each man when he receives the grace of justification.

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638. *Grades of Habitual Grace.*—It will be readily understood that the points established in the preceding paragraph do not belong to the defined faith of the Church, although they come to us with the weight of a more or less general agreement of theologians. We must now return to dogmatic matter, and establish certain properties of justification, the existence of which is defined by the Council of Trent. And first we will show that habitual grace admits of degrees.

We have seen that in the teaching of the founders of Protestantism the sins of man are not taken away but are merely covered; and that there is no justice in man, but the justice of the Incarnate God is imputed to the creature. They were therefore consistent in holding that there are no degrees of justice, for an object so veiled that no gaze can pierce to it cannot be more effectually concealed: nor does the justice of Christ admit of degrees, whether it be imputed to one man or to another. We must allow to Luther such credit as attaches to the boldness which is not afraid of following out false principles even to blasphemous conclusions; and this evil boldness is illustrated in his declaration that we are all equally great Christians, no less holy than the Mother of God. The contrary doctrine that men grow in grace when their faith goes along with good works, is defined by the Council of Trent (Sess. 6, cap. 10; Denz. 685), and no one that has not a theory to support can doubt that this is the teaching of Scripture.

Grades of justice differ in different men, for many

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sins were forgiven to her that loved much, but to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less (St. Luke vii. 47); where it is to be observed that even the lower degree of love secured forgiveness; and inequality of grace between man and man is implied when St. Peter is asked whether he loved Christ more than did the rest. (St. John xxi. 15.) Also, each man can grow in grace, just as the light of dawn grows brighter and brighter until the face of the sun is seen. (Prov. iv. 18.) Blessed is the man who in his heart hath disposed to ascend by steps, for the Lawgiver shall give a blessing, and he shall go from virtue to virtue (Psalm lxxxiii. 6—8); and we are expressly exhorted to grow in grace. (2 St. Peter iii. 18.) Lastly, the reward that awaits the just man in the other life varies according to his works (Romans ii. 6); for in the house of the Father are many mansions (St. John xiv. 2); and one star differeth from another in brightness, and so is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. xv. 41.)

The fundamental cause of this difference is the will of God, dividing to every one as He will (1 Cor. xii. 11); but the texts that we have just quoted teach that much depends also upon the dispositions of each man, for God does not force His gifts upon us: He that opens his mouth wide is filled. (Psalm lxxx. 11.)

Habitual grace is wholly lost by mortal sin, as we shall see. (n. 640.) There is general agreement that it is not susceptible of partial loss by venial sin, for otherwise multiplied venial sin would be mortal, which is a contradiction. Venial sin certainly

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stands in the way of actual grace, and checks its supply.

639. *Grace uncertain.*—We have seen that in the Lutheran system, the grace of justification essentially consists in the faith that God has covered the sins of man, and imputed to him the justice of Christ (n. 627); and since a man cannot have faith unless he knows that he believes, it follows that, as often as one is justified, he believes with Divine faith that he has received this grace. To be justified and to believe oneself justified are merely two aspects of the same thing. This doctrine of the absolute certainty of justification falls of itself when its foundation of the sufficiency of faith alone is removed.

Some Catholics have held it possible for a sinner to have natural certainty that he has done what has been revealed as being the divinely instituted means of forgiveness, as for instance that he has received the Sacrament of Penance with due dispositions; and they represent that in this indirect way they have Divine faith that they are justified. But besides other difficulties which hinder assurance that a Sacrament has been duly received, this theory assumes the possibility of being absolutely assured of the sufficiency of the needful dispositions, especially the sorrow for sin; this sufficiency cannot be known except by way of conjecture, and conjecture does not avail as basis of an act of faith. (n. 312.) This doctrine is curiously illustrated by a Decretal of Pope Innocent III., which has found a place in the Canon Law. (lib. v. tit. 34, *Accepimus.*) Some

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charges of simony and other crimes had been brought against the Archbishop of Besançon, and in the regular course of the resulting legal proceedings, he should have sworn that he had never done what was alleged. He, however, departed from the usual form of oath, and swore only that he was innocent. This departure from usage came to the knowledge of the Pope, who was not satisfied; there was reason to believe that the charges were well-founded, and that the accused was ready to swear to his innocence, merely because he believed that his sin had been forgiven by God: a point with which, of course, the human tribunal had nothing to do. It is declared that an oath of innocence under these circumstances would be not a little rash, indiscreet, and insufficient. It would in fact be swearing to that as certain which in truth is uncertain.

The teaching of Trent admits the possibility of a person having the certainty of faith that he is in the state of grace, in the case where he has received a particular revelation to this effect. It is commonly held that our Blessed Lady received such a revelation, as perhaps did also St. Paul (2 Cor. xii. 9): nor is there any ground to deny that the same favour may have been extended to some other saints. The matter is private and unknown. But apart from these extraordinary cases, not only can no one have the certainty of faith that he is in favour before God, but he cannot have reason to put aside all misgiving on the subject; one who considers his own weakness will see that absolute

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certainty is unattainable; especially as the judgment must necessarily be passed by each man as arbiter in his own cause on evidence furnished exclusively by himself.

At the same time, while the Catholic doctrine rejects that assured confidence which may well be presumptuous, it is far from leading to despair. He who is not aware that the guilt of mortal sin is upon him, whose desire is to please God and save his soul, who grieves at the thought at what he has done amiss, loves prayer and the use of the Sacraments, and strives to use his opportunities of doing good works, will have a conjecture that he stands well before God, which will give him a far truer peace than is attainable by Lutheran assurance. He takes to heart the warning of the Wise Man not to be without fear about sin forgiven (Ecclus. v. 5), and he prays to be cleansed from his secret sins (Psalm xviii. 13), and is full of humble calm trust that with fear and trembling he is working out his salvation. (Philipp. ii. 12.) The life of such a one is in some sense an anticipation of Heaven upon earth.

640. *The loss of Grace.*—We come now to the last point which we shall notice, where the false view of justification, invented by the Reformers, leads to consequences which the Catholic Church rejects. It concerns the question whether the man who is once in favour with God can ever lose that favour. Both Luther and Calvin were forced to admit that men who exhibited the signs of being justified, occasionally commit acts which seemed inconsistent with the friendship of God, but they

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differed as to the explanation to be given of such cases. Calvin admitted that these acts might be real sins, and saved his doctrine that grace is indefectible, by saying that the man who sinned had never had grace. The signs of grace had been deceptive. Luther more boldly declared that acts which would be sins in others, when committed by the just man were not sins at all; but somewhat inconsistently he allowed that one guilty of infidelity might fall from grace, though it is hard to see how any kind of malice of the man could hinder God when contemplating him from seeing that justice of Christ which had once for all been imputed to him. The Catholic doctrine, that one who is truly in grace may fall from that state by sin, is defined in the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent (cann. 23, 27; Denz. 715, 719), and is supported by plain testimonies of Scripture. The Apostles in the Garden were in the friendship of God (St. John xv. 15), and yet they needed the warning to watch and pray, lest they should fall into temptation (St. Matt. xxvi. 41); He that thinketh himself to stand is to take heed lest he fall (1 Cor. x. 12); and all are warned not to be high-minded, but fear. (Romans xi. 20.) The branch that was in the vine will be cut off if it fail to bear fruit. (St. John xv. 2.) Some make shipwreck of faith (1 Timothy i. 19, iv. 1, vi. 10), which cannot be unless they have had true faith. We may also prove our point by examples, for it is impossible to doubt that Saul, David, Solomon, St. Peter, were at one time in favour with God and afterwards fell away.

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The arguments in favour of indefectible grace are based on the Lutheran explanation of justification which we have shown to be false. (n. 632.) We are therefore dispensed from going into them.

641. *Recapitulation.*—In this chapter we have established certain points of the Catholic doctrine of justification, where it is in marked contrast with what is maintained by such Protestants as have not broken away from the teachings of their leaders. Many of them, especially among the Anglicans, have felt compelled to break away, for all religious instincts and the texts of Scripture combine to lead men's minds to revolt against the teaching that it is the same thing to believe oneself just and to be just; that the just man does not sin, though he violate each one of the commandments, and that one who closes a life of apostolic labour and care for the souls and bodies of his brother men by a martyr's death, is no more dear to God at the end of his career than he was at its beginning.

It cannot be doubted that this outrageous teaching has done much to swell the ranks of unbelievers in all countries where it has found an entry.

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CHAPTER III.

INFUSED VIRTUES AND GIFTS.

642. *Subject of the Chapter.*—We have now to consider certain changes that are wrought by God in the soul of a sinner who is justified, and which remain with him, enabling him to do the works proper to the new life which he has begun; virtues are infused into the soul which also receives the gifts of the Holy Ghost. We shall do no more than give a very short explanation of the meaning of these terms, for it is impossible to attempt to treat the matter completely. A part of it is concerned with the definition of virtue, and this belongs properly to Philosophy. (See Father Joseph Rickaby, *Moral Philosophy*, part i. ch. 5.)

643. *Habits.*—Since Virtue is a Habit, it is necessary to say something as to the meaning of this word. The explanation will be found in the *Summa* of St. Thomas. (1. 2. qq. 49—54.)

A Habit is a quality which is permanently in a thing, and is not readily liable to change, in virtue of which a man is better or worse. A person may have a present inclination in some direction, which inclination is permanent and not transient, like an act; but if it would disappear under the smallest influence that is made in the opposite direction,

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then this inclination is a mere disposition, and not a habit. The definition of Habit is applicable to some qualities which affect the thing as it is in itself, without reference to its putting forth any act; in this sense, physicians will speak of a patient's habit of body, and it is in the same sense that we speak of habitual grace. But by usage, the word Habit is commonly confined to such qualities as have immediate connection with action, disposing the subject to put his powers in operation.

Habits may be good or bad, as is obvious, for the definition says nothing as to the character of the change induced by the habit; the aspect of a person may be comely or uncomely, he may be an eloquent orator or a confused stammerer, but the evil and the good are alike habits. A more important distinction is that which concerns the origin of habits.

Habits may be natural, acquired, or infused. Those habits are natural which arise from the nature of the subject, independently of any action of himself or of another. These may affect the whole race to which the individual belongs, or they may be peculiar to him; thus, it is a habit of the whole race of man to be capable of laughter, to be a confirmed invalid is a habit of the individual. Many habits are acquired by repeated acts, and it is a main part of the work of education to secure that the acts done shall be such as to secure good habits. Thus some persons are habitually punctual and others not so; to be able to play on a musical instrument is a habit; but there is no better illus-

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tration of what is meant by an acquired habit, than facility in speaking a language. This facility is generated by repeated acts, but in the case of the vernacular, the process begins at so early an age that its first steps are soon forgotten; and when one language has been acquired, a second is mastered with greater ease.

Our chief concern now is with infused habits. Whatever is done by second causes, God can do by His own direct action, and He can, therefore, in an instant work in a man the change which would be worked by a long series of repeated acts. In this way, habits may be infused which are ordinarily natural or acquired, as when a paralytic regains by miracle the use of his limbs, or the power of speaking various tongues is granted suddenly. But these habits, when gained, do not differ from what might be gained otherwise; they are supernatural in their origin only. There are other habits which are wholly supernatural, for no creature can have them except by the direct gift of God; they perfect the powers of the soul, rendering them, under the influence of actual grace, capable of putting forth supernatural acts, which would otherwise be wholly beyond the ability of the creature. (n. 481.)

These infused habits are not powers, like the will and understanding, for they presume the existence of these powers in the soul; but they differ from other habits, in that they give the ability to act, and not mere ease in acting. There is a controversy whether besides giving the ability they also give ease. Valentia holds the affirmative, quoting the

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words of the Prophet Malachias (iii. 18), "You shall return and shall see the difference between the just and the wicked;" but he acknowledges that the ease generated of repeated acts is far more conspicuous than what is due to the infused habit. Vasquez and many others, on the other hand, appeal to experience. They compare two men, one of whom has never been in the grace of God but has lived recklessly, while the other had lived long in friendship with God, but at length sinned and has acquired habits of evil. They both receive the grace of justification, and strive to live virtuously. The first, as we shall see presently, has a lower degree of infused good habits than the second (nn. 645, 654), and yet experience seems to show that they will find equal difficulty in keeping the commandments; and if so, the infused habit gives no more facility to the one than to the other. Suarez strives to reconcile the two views, pointing out that facility depends on the ability of the power and on the absence of obstacles; it may be that the will of the second man mentioned above has the greater ability for doing good, but this advantage is masked by the strength of passion which both the first and the second retain from the days when they lived as enemies of God.

There is no doubt that supernatural acts grow easier when they are repeatedly done under the influence of actual grace; this greater ease is due to the increase of the infused habits of good, as we shall see, but also to the natural effect of repeated acts to diminish the force of contrary tendencies.

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644. *Virtues.*—Having spoken of habits in general, St. Thomas goes on (1. 2. qq. 55—89) to treat more particularly of habits so far as they have a moral character; these alone concern man's attainment of his last end, and therefore the theologian says nothing about the arts and other such habits. Habits may be morally good or bad. Good habits are the virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and, as some would say, also the beatitudes and fruits annexed to them (nn. 646, 647); bad habits are vices and sins. Much of this wide and very interesting matter belongs to the borderland between Dogmatic and Moral Theology (n. 4), and we must leave it alone, and confine ourselves chiefly to such points as are properly dogmatic; and first we must explain something about the virtues.

A virtue is defined to be a good quality of the mind, through which a man lives well, and which no one uses amiss. This definition applies alike to acquired virtues and those which are infused, the difference of which was explained when we spoke of habits. (n. 643.) A virtue perfects some one power of the soul, principally, but it also may be diffused so as to influence other powers, as when the will commands the intellect to apply itself to the consideration of a particular subject. This power may be the intellect or the will. Five natural virtues of the intellect are enumerated: understanding, science, wisdom, prudence, and art. We are not concerned with these, but the sixth intellectual virtue is faith, which perfects the intellect in knowledge of the supernatural, and this

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belongs to Dogmatic Theology. In the same way the will is perfected by the four cardinal virtues, prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. Why prudence has a place among virtues both of the intellect and the will, is thus explained by Father Rickaby (*Moral Philosophy*, p. 88): "Prudence in its essence is an intellectual virtue, being a habit resident in the understanding, but it deals with the subject-matter of the moral virtues, pointing out the measure of temperance, the bounds of fortitude, or the path of justice." Besides these four natural virtues of the will, there are two that are supernatural: hope and charity.

The three supernatural virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, are called also theological, as distinct from the natural virtues which are called moral. But it must be understood that every act of virtue, if done under the influence of actual grace, may have supernatural value, and that this value does not attach to any act whatever, done without this influence. (n. 591.) The theological virtues are so called because they have God for their object, and are directly concerned with the conduct of man as tending to God.

645. *Infusion of Virtues.*—It is the certain doctrine of theologians that some habits of virtue are infused into the soul when a sinner is justified, and some believe that the doctrine is absolutely of faith, at least as regards the theological virtues. This is the sense in which the Fathers understand the phrase of Scripture, that God will take away the heart of stone and give a heart of flesh (Ezech. xi.

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19), especially as it is added that this shall be done that men may walk in the commandments of God: the inward renewal therefore of which we have spoken (n. 636) must be some permanent change for good wrought in the heart by God: in other words, an infusion of virtue. The same meaning is expressed when Jeremias declares that God will write His law upon the hearts of His people. (Jerem. xxxi. 33.) If any virtues be infused, it would seem that those at least must be included which are most noble and most necessary, that is to say, the theological virtues, as the Council of Trent teaches. (Sess. 6, cap. 7; Denz. 682.) In regard to the moral virtues there is more room for doubt, but the common teaching is that these also are infused. All hold that the habit of charity and habitual grace come to the soul together, and are lost at the same time, when mortal sin is committed: and so closely are they akin that Scotus, Bellarmine, and others hold that they are really the same: but the contrary opinion is more commonly followed, on the authority of the Thomist school and Suarez. The habits of faith and hope are, it is believed, not lost except when a sin is committed which is directly opposed to these virtues. The considerations on which these conclusions are based must be omitted as too subtle.

646. *Gifts of the Holy Ghost.*—The Holy Ghost is in a peculiar way the Giver of grace, and the work of the sanctification of men is appropriated to Him. Peter Lombard went so far as to say (*Sentent.* lib. i. dist. 17, 2), that the habit of charity

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in the soul is the Holy Ghost Himself; and it is sometimes, but wrongly, stated that Petavius agreed with Peter upon this point. The view is however the first in the catalogue of those in which the Master is not commonly followed (n. 532): and he is deservedly deserted, for he set up an exception to the axiom that all the operations of the Blessed Trinity are common to all the Three Persons, excepting those alone that are purely internal to God.

But besides habitual grace, and the virtues, there are certain supernatural habits, which are called Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and are given to man to dispose him to receive influence from God, leading him on to his salvation. These are commonly reckoned as being the seven enumerated by Isaias (xi. 2, 3), of which Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, and Knowledge perfect the intellect, while Fortitude, Piety, and the Fear of the Lord belong to the will of man. It does not appear however that we must necessarily deny the existence of other Gifts beyond the seven.

We have illustrations of the effects of these Gifts in Scripture, when we read that Samson shook the pillars of the house of Dagon (Judges xvi.), and caused his own death, which would have been unlawful without the special command of God, the Master of life. And Simeon came "by the Spirit" into the Temple, which means that he came in pursuance of a motion coming from the Holy Ghost, which the Gift he had enabled him to feel and obey. But we need not think that the presence of the Gifts never produces effects except in extra-

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ordinary cases of this nature, for certainly there is a habit of soul which enables man to notice the movements of grace which are constantly sent by God to each man, and the only controversy is whether this habit is really distinct from the habit of the virtue concerned. Scotus and some others deny this distinction, but the opposite opinion is held by St. Thomas and most moderns.

647. *Fruits and Beatitudes.*—In the Epistle to the Galatians (v. 19—23), St. Paul enumerates some works of the flesh, or classes of sins; and with these he contrasts the fruit of the Spirit, which is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity. It seems that these, like the works of the flesh with which they are contrasted, are to be understood as acts and not as special habits: they are the results of the habits of virtue present in the soul. The list is given by way of specimen only, and it is useless to attempt to say why precisely twelve are mentioned, or to discriminate them exactly one from another. They are called fruits of the Holy Ghost, because it is appropriated to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity to will and to accomplish in us according to the good-will of God. (Philipp. ii. 13.)

The eight Beatitudes with which our Lord opened His Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. v. 3—12) are in like manner the results of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost: they are therefore acts and not habits. They, and their rewards, are too well known to need to be copied here. The eighth

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Beatitude would seem to comprehend all the others; for the poor in spirit will suffer persecution and are blessed, for their reward is great in Heaven; and so of the rest. But the correspondence of the remaining seven Beatitudes to the Gifts is not clear, and the matter is variously explained by different authors. The whole matter is discussed elaborately by St. Thomas. (1. 2. qq. 69. 70.)

648. *Recapitulation.*—This very imperfect chapter has explained the nature of habits, especially habits of virtue, with the distinction that some are acquired, and some infused. A few remarks are added on the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Ghost, and on the Beatitudes.

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CHAPTER IV.

MERIT.

649. *Subject of the Chapter.*—It remains to treat very briefly the questions concerning merit. This subject has sometimes been made the principal scene of the contest between the Church and the Protestant sects, but it is not well adapted for the purpose. The views held on both sides concerning merit are little more than corollaries from the essentially diverse doctrines on justification, which we have explained. But the matter has occupied so prominent a place in controversy that it cannot be passed over altogether: besides which, it is in itself very interesting, as showing how men stand before God.

650. *Nature of Merit.*—We have already (n. 604) had occasion to explain the meaning of the word "merit," and the distinction between condign and congruous merit. Merit, as used in Theology, is always understood as corresponding to true services done to another or homage rendered to him: when taken in a bad sense it is usual to speak of demerit, although apart from usage the word merit might bear either meaning. That the sinner merits death is merely another way of saying that the wages of sin is death. (Romans vi. 23.) We shall show

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presently that it is possible, through grace, for man to have true merit before God, who has in a certain sense made Himself our debtor, although more properly His debt is due to Himself, for that which is owed is nothing but His own fulfilment of His own decree. (St. Thomas, 1. 2. q. 114. a. 1. ad. 3.) In this place we shall point out some of the conditions of merit.

651. *Meritorious Acts.*—Nothing can be meritorious which is not a positive act. But it will be observed that there may be some positive character about conduct which at first sight looks as if it were merely negative: an omission. But just as we speak of sins of omission, when the neglect of duty involves some adherence of the will to something which is inconsistent with the performance of a duty, so the omission to comply with suggestions to evil may involve a positive act of adherence to God, and so be meritorious. There may be a sin of sloth in the omission to hear an obligatory Mass, and there may be merit in abstaining, out of love for God, from taking revenge on an enemy. An act to be meritorious must be done with freedom, not from coercion alone, but also from necessity: this point is a matter of defined faith, for the contradictory taught by Jansenius is condemned as heretical. (Denz. 968.) The freedom must be such as suffices for mortal sin. (nn. 596, 618.) It need hardly be said that no act can have merit before God if it be morally bad from any point of view: but it may sometimes happen that an act which in itself is morally good may be closely preceded or

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followed by another act which is bad; and it may be difficult in the concrete to tell whether these acts can be severed or whether they form one act, which is good in itself, but vitiated by an evil circumstance; it is therefore well that nothing depends on the judgment formed by men as to the case, and we remember that all things are naked and open to His eyes to whom our speech is. (Hebrews iv. 13.) Since all merit in the present order is supernatural, there is no merit in any act done without the influence of grace. (n. 604.)

An act which is good and meritorious as an exercise of one virtue does not lose this character because it is also an exercise of another virtue; in truth, the merit is the greater. Thus, attendance at Mass is always an act of religion and meritorious; but there is more merit when it is also an act of obedience to the law of the Church, which enjoins this attendance on certain days. Nor is it certain that a good act will fail of being meritorious merely, because it was not done under the influence of an actual intention to offer service to God, since the condition of fallen man is such that this intention cannot be maintained for long, even if it be allowed that an intention once explicitly formed may last virtually for some time: it is sufficient that the act, being done by a person in the state of grace, is a result springing naturally from the habit of charity which he has. (n. 645.) The words of St. Paul, that whatever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God, cannot be proved to convey a precept (n. 596); it is sufficient if they be understood to be a counsel,

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and no one questions that every person does well to strive to have an actual, or at least virtual, intention of serving God in all he does.

If it were not for a subterfuge of the Semi-Pelagians (nn. 390, 590), it would not be necessary to remark that merit attaches only to acts that are really done, not to those which would be done on some unverified supposition.

652. *Earners and Payer.*—It was the teaching of Baius (n. 390, vi.) that good works done even by men who are not in the state of grace might be meritorious before God: and he held that the contrary doctrine was Pelagian: Baius considered that all obedience to the Divine law was meritorious in him that obeyed. This teaching was condemned, and deservedly, for it is directly opposed to what Christ tells us in a text which is so instructive on the whole subject of grace. (St. John xv. 4—8.) The sinner who is not in the grace of God is assuredly cut off from the vine, and cannot bring forth fruit: and one who is under condemnation, and whose just punishment would be eternal separation from God, cannot be earning a greater closeness of union with Him. The habitual grace of God in the soul is so far the principle which is the source of meritorious acts, that probably the act of him who has the intenser degree of this grace is the more meritorious; other things of course being supposed equal.

Also, we learn from Scripture that the time for meriting does not extend beyond the present life. The night cometh, when no man can work.

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(St. John ix. 4.) We shall be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he has done, whether it be good or evil. And even while living, no man can earn *condignly* (n. 604), except for himself: there may be congruous merit in his intercessory prayer, but there is not merit in the most proper sense of the word. To merit condignly for others belongs to Christ alone.

When the work and the doer fulfil these conditions, there remains the question whether merit attaches as a matter of course, or whether any Divine acceptance or promise is necessary. Vasquez maintains the former view, Scotus the latter. Ripalda and Suarez hold that works done from the principle of charity have in themselves something that deserves reward, but that he who does them is secure of this reward only through the acceptance of them at his hands by God: but here, as in so many other cases, we can do no more than indicate the existence of a question.

653. *Merit possible.*—So far we have assumed that man can merit with God. This is defined by the Council of Trent (Sess. 6, can. 32): If any one say that the good works of a justified man are works of God in such sense that they are not also the merits of that justified man: or that the justified man, by the good works which are done by him through the grace of God and the merits of Christ, does not truly merit increase of grace, eternal life, and the attainment of eternal life, if only he died in the grace of God, and also an

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increase of glory, let him be anathema. (n. 494.) The proof of this doctrine is found clearly in the Scripture. Passages are frequent which speak of the reward reserved in the next life for them that hearken to the exhortations of Christ. We see that in the whole series of the Beatitudes (St. Matt. v. 3—12), especially in the last, where the promise is given that they who are reviled for the sake of Christ shall have a very great reward in Heaven. St. Paul felt that he had fought the good fight, and was assured that there was laid up for him a crown of justice which the Lord, the just Judge, would render to him in that day; and not only to him, but to them also that love His coming (2 Timothy iv. 7, 8): and the promise is given yet more expressly to the Corinthians that every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. (1 Cor. iii. 8; see also St. Matt. xvi. 27, xxv. 34, 35.) The crown received by the winner in a race among the Greeks was certainly a reward of labour; but St. Paul uses this image to represent the incorruptible crown to which the faithful Christian aspires. (1 Cor. ix. 24, 25.) The servant of God is placed over many things because he has been faithful in a few (St. Matt. xxv. 21): and we are exhorted to do good and to impart, because by such sacrifices God's favour is obtained. (Hebrews xiii. 16.)

A very short notice will suffice for some texts which have been understood as opposed to our doctrine. Isaias (lxiv. 6) declares that we are all become unclean, and that all our good deeds are

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foul and worthless: but those who adduce this passage as opposed to the Catholic doctrine of merit must make out that the Prophet was speaking on behalf of all mankind, and not merely acknowledging the corruption that prevailed among the Jews of his time: they must also show the inadmissibility of another interpretation, which explains the text as declaring that the rites of the Mosaic ritual would be worthless in the days of the Messias.

Again, when we have done all things that are commanded us we are to say that we are unprofitable servants. The deep conviction of this truth is perfectly consistent with the Catholic doctrine. We are unprofitable, for we do nothing but what God might have done by a mere act of His will: He is none the richer for our service. Nevertheless, He has been pleased to put into our hands the means of serving Him, and He is pleased to reward our service as if it were profitable to Him. A diligent school-child truly earns his prize, although his labour brings no profit to his teachers.

We maintain with St. Paul (Romans vi. 23), that life everlasting is the grace of God, for good works have no merit unless done under the influence of grace (nn. 604, 650): but the works also proceed from the free-will of man, and on this account may be meritorious. In the same way, our doctrine is not at all injurious to the merits of Christ, through which alone we receive the grace without which we could have no merit.

654. *What is merited.*—We have shown (n. 592) that it is impossible for man to merit, even con-

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gruously, the first actual grace; which in fact follows from what we have said, that there is no merit in works not done under grace. With the aid of grace, a sinner may merit further actual graces with congruous merit (n. 604); and of course, the just can do the same; especially they can merit congruously the grace of final perseverance. Final perseverance cannot be merited condignly (n. 599); but the objects of this merit are what are enumerated in the canon of the Council of Trent, lately quoted. (n. 653.) It will be seen that the texts of Scripture by which we establish the existence of merit extend to these objects.

655. *Merit lost and regained.*—The destruction wrought by mortal sin (n. 596) is so sweeping that the sinner at once loses whatever supernatural merit he may have acquired, as completely as he loses habitual grace and charity. (nn. 640, 645.) But if, by the grace of God, the sinner be subsequently justified, habitual grace and charity are certainly restored to him, and it is at least rash, if not erroneous (n. 328), to deny that along with the gifts he also receives back the merits which he had had: these merits must be regarded as having been hindered from profiting him, but not as being wholly destroyed by the sin. This doctrine is the consentient opinion of theologians, who collect it from the declaration of St. Paul (Hebrews vi. 10), that God is not unjust that He should forget the works of men and the love which they have shown in His Name. If merit were not restored, the loss

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occasioned by the sin would never be repaired, and it would amount to an eternal punishment; and this seems inconsistent with the certain doctrine that the sin is wholly forgiven. As long as the sin is unforgiven it is an obstacle to God's favours coming to the soul: but when the obstacle is removed they return, and there is no need of new labour to earn them again.

We see therefore that God's mercy shown in forgiving a sinner is more illustrious than His justice in dealing with him that sins. Sins once forgiven never revive, but merit is restored to the sinner who does penance. We have an illustration of the words that where sin abounded, grace did more abound. (Romans v. 20.)

656. *Recapitulation.*—This short chapter has given the explanation of a point of Catholic doctrine which has been strangely misunderstood, as if it were in some way derogatory to Christ. Far from being so, it exhibits the fulness of the redemption wrought by Him, and the way in which His merits give a new and supernatural dignity, not to the life of man in general, but to each act done by every man in whose soul this redemption has wrought the effect of justification and who has not thrown away the great gift by grave and wilful disobedience to the Divine law.

657. *Close of the Treatise.*—Among the many points of difference between the Catholic faith on the one hand and the teachings of the Protestant sects on the other, the doctrine of Justification is perhaps that which must be regarded as funda-

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mental. It has its influence on every part of the view taken of the position of a rational creature before his Creator. In this Treatise we have tried to explain the rival teachings, and given our reasons for holding that the doctrine of the Church alone is in accord with Scripture and theological reason. We have quoted the Fathers but rarely, for the Protestant Reformers acknowledge that their doctrine on this matter was an innovation, and even glory in the discovery of the truth which they imagine themselves to have been the first to make.

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Treatise the Fifteenth.

The Sacraments in General.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

658. *Plan of the Treatise.*—Man being composed of soul and body, every religion that is to satisfy the needs of man must have in it a spiritual element addressed to the mind of the worshipper, and a material element made known to him by his senses; and there must be a certain correspondence between these two elements. The Christian religion is no exception to this rule. In the Catholic Church, God is worshipped in spirit and in truth (St. John iv. 24); but this spiritual worship is accompanied and signified and kept alive by certain outward observances, the consideration of which will occupy us for some time. In particular, most Christians agree that there are a limited number of external rites to which a peculiar character has been attached by the ordinance of God Himself, and to which the name of Sacrament is appropriated. In the present Treatise, we shall show that these rites are seven in number, Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist,

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Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony; and we shall discuss in successive chapters their nature, operation, and requisites, so far as these are common to all the seven. Subsequent Treatises will deal with the points that are peculiar to each.

659. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the present chapter, we shall explain more precisely the meaning of the word Sacrament, and show what are the rites to which it has been applicable in different stages of the religious history of the world.

660. *Dignity of the Sacraments.*—To show how high a place is held by the Sacraments of the Christian religion, it will be well to set down some of the phrases that have been used by theologians who mention them. The Sacraments are spoken of as relics of the Incarnation, left on earth now that the visible presence of Christ is withdrawn: they are precious vases containing the Blood and Merits of Christ, from which men can draw and refresh their souls; they are conduits, bringing the graces of Christ from Heaven to earth; the healing balm for the wounds of human nature; fountains of water springing up to life eternal. Mankind can find in the Sacraments the firm foundations of their spiritual life, in various forms, adapted to their varying conditions and necessities. In virtue of the Sacraments, the Church is as the place of pleasure from which went forth the streams to water Paradise (Genesis ii. 10); the garden wherein grow the lilies of virginity, the roses of martyrdom, and the humble violets that symbolize the other forms of sanctity; all these blossoms receive their life from the Blood of Christ

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that flows to them through the sacred rites. In the Sacraments, Christ still works on earth, as He worked when, during His visible life, His word and His touch healed diseases of soul and body; for although the rite is performed by the tongue and hand of human agents, yet in all the principal Minister is Christ Himself.

The sacred ceremonies are rendered deserving of these high encomia by the institution of God, who has been pleased to promise to give His grace to the soul of every duly disposed recipient. The charge, therefore, that we attribute magical efficacy to material acts, as if a constraint were put on God by the acts and words of man, betrays a gross and total misunderstanding of the Catholic doctrine. God, who is Master of His gifts, may give them under whatsoever conditions He pleases: He has promised that they shall be given with and through the outward rite, and no man can declare that such a promise is beyond Divine competence.

The justification of what has been said on the dignity of the Sacraments must be sought in the present and succeeding Treatises.

661. *Sacrament. Sign.*—The word Sacrament is of Latin origin, and was used by the Romans in a great variety of senses, through all of which ran the idea of something being secured by a religious sanction. Thus, in the early days of Rome, when a lawsuit was brought, each of the parties was often bound to deposit a sum of money with the priests. The successful litigant received back what he had deposited, but the money forfeited by the loser was

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applied in providing sacrifices. Such an action was called sacramental, from the purpose to which one part of the money staked was applied. The Romans also used the word Sacrament for an engagement entered into under the sacred sanction of an oath, especially the oath of fidélity to their general which was taken by soldiers; and it seems to have been in this sense that Pliny used the word (Epist. 96 [97]; see n. 41) when he says that Christians bound themselves by a Sacrament to abstain from crime; it is curious to note this anticipation of the language of theology, for there is little room for doubt that the reference is to the Sacrament of Penance, received as preparation for the Holy Eucharist: but the use of the word by the heathen magistrate can scarcely be due to its being already in use among the Bithynian Christians of whom he speaks; it was not till much later that the word received a precise meaning among the theologians of the West.

The Greek word corresponding to "Sacrament" in its Christian use, is "Mystery." (n. 16.) This word points to the special care with which the Christian rites were concealed from the heathen, and even from the catechumens, who had not received Baptism, just as the priests at certain heathen shrines practised secret rites, the nature and inner meaning of which was disclosed to none but the initiated. That the same discipline prevailed in the Christian Church is well brought out by a passage where St. Augustine uses an illustration drawn from the profound ignorance of the cate-

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chumens on certain matters which were familiar to all the baptized. If asked whether they believed in Christ, they will answer that they believe, and sign themselves with the sign of the Cross; but if asked whether they eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, they will fail to understand what is meant. We shall have occasion to refer to this matter again. (nn. 665, 703.)

The word Mystery acquired a wider meaning, being applied to any object which raised a feeling of awe, such as what we call secrets of state. It is used in this way by the writer of the Book of Tobias (xii. 7), where it is represented in the Vulgate by the word Sacrament. The use of these terms grew wider and wider, extending to whatever was of religious interest: for example, St. Cyprian speaks of the practice of morning prayer as a Sacrament (*De Oratione Domin.* n. 35; *P.L.* 4, 541); the result of this vagueness is that the history of the word has little value, and throws no light on what ultimately became the accepted theological meaning. We are dealing with a subject where we must look to things and not to words.

The later and precise use of the word Sacrament is foreshadowed in a passage of St. Augustine, where he says that signs which guide to the things of God receive the name of Sacraments (Epist. 138, to Marcellinus, n. 7; *P.L.* 33, 527); but it was not till the twelfth century that the usage became constant among divines not to use the word Sacrament except for a definite number of sensible signs of sanctification given to man by Christ, who has

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annexed to the due use of these signs the power of working that which they signify. This account will be clearer if the meaning of the word Sign is explained. The explanation is easy, and may be very brief.

A Sign is some thing the knowledge of which leads to the knowledge of some other thing; it will be found that this account covers all the ordinary uses of the word. The sign may become known through the senses, or it may be perceived only by a man who studies his interior consciousness. There must be a connection between the sign and the thing signified, and this connection may arise from the nature of the two, independently of any act of a free-will; or it may be purely conventional, originating in the act of the free-will of one person, and recognized by others. Thus it is from the very nature of things that where there is smoke there is fire, and where there is fire there is smoke; each of these is therefore a natural sign of the other: but there is no natural connection between thoughts, sounds, and marks impressed on paper; when, therefore, words uttered make known the thoughts of the utterer, and words written make known the sounds to which they correspond, these signs are conventional, originating in the free-will of him who first formed the language used, and the value of its alphabetical characters. Cases may occur of what we may call obvious symbolism, where it may be difficult to say whether we have a natural sign or one that is conventional: the device on the Roman medal which shows a woman seated at the foot of

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a palm-tree and weeping, undoubtedly makes known the conquest of Judæa by Titus; but there may be dispute whether this meaning is natural or conventional, and fortunately the question is of no importance for our purpose.

662. *Christian and other Sacraments.*—We may now state with something more of fulness what is required to constitute a Sacrament in the theological sense. Every Sacrament must be a sensible sign, for it must admit of being known by men for whose use and benefit it is instituted. It is a sacred sign, both in itself and in regard to that which it signifies, which is sanctifying grace. (n. 583, vi.) Further, the Christian Sacraments do not merely signify grace, but they actually confer it, as will be proved. (n. 672.) As to Sacraments that are not Christian, very little is known, and we can do no more than make a few remarks, calling attention to the questions which arise.

The interval between the creation of Adam and his sin seems to have been very short, and there is no reason to think that during this interval any rite was instituted having the nature of a Sacrament, in the theological sense of the word; in the looser phraseology of earlier times, the Tree of Life (n. 487) might be called a Sacrament, and the union of man and wife. Our ignorance is absolute as to what would have been the course of God's providence in this regard had Adam not sinned, and the state of innocence had been prolonged.

Since God wills all men to be saved (n. 389), and Christ died for all men (n. 543), it follows that some

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means has always existed by which children conceived and born in original sin (n. 500) may be cleansed from this stain and clothed with habitual grace. This means is now found in Christian Baptism; but speaking for the times before the coming of Christ, and excluding those to whom the law of circumcision was applicable, as will be explained directly, it seems that the regeneration of children was secured by some vague act of faith in a coming Redeemer; and since the children were incapable of performing such an act, it is concluded that the act of parents or others on their behalf must have been sufficient. So far, there seems to be agreement among theologians; but we must observe that their conclusions show merely what they think must have been, and not what they find distinctly expressed in the records of revelation. The revelation given by God concerns those to whom it is proposed, namely, the Israelites and the Christian Church, and says little concerning the dealings of God with the souls of other persons. It is certain that the appointed means of justification, whatever its nature, had its efficacy only through the merits of Christ. Whether it is to be called a Sacrament or not, depends on the question whether it was necessarily an external act. St. Bonaventure thinks that a merely internal act of belief might have sufficed; but most writers think that there is more probability in the view held by St. Thomas that something must have been done to manifest externally the internal act. If this be so, the remedy for sin seems to deserve to be called a Sacrament of the natural law. We know nothing

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as to any other Sacraments available for the benefit of man in that state.

In due time, the law of circumcision was given, binding all the male issue of Abraham (Genesis xvii.) on their attaining the age of eight days. This rite was the appointed sacrament of regeneration for all for whom it was given, but the natural remedy continued to be the instrument of regeneration for all mankind who were not members of the chosen race, as also for the female descendants of Abraham: perhaps also, for such of his male issue as died before the eighth day.

Such is the belief of theologians as to the means by which the will of God to save men was applied to infants during the centuries that elapsed before the coming of Christ, when Holy Baptism took the place of all earlier and less perfect rites.

It would appear that not Baptism only, but others of the Christian Sacraments were foreshadowed by certain ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, to which something of a sacramental character attached. Thus, the eating of the Paschal Lamb (Exodus xii.), and of the loaves of proposition (Exodus xxv. 30; 1 Kings xxi. 4, 6), or bread that was left for a certain time on a table in the Holy Place, and then removed to make room for new loaves, was a figure of the Blessed Eucharist. A large part of the Book of Leviticus is occupied with the rules as to the modes of purifying such persons as had incurred legal uncleanness, as by contact with a corpse or the like; and it is probable that some cleansing from the spiritual uncleanness of sin

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went along with these ceremonies, in which case they correspond to the Sacrament of Penance; and the Old Law, no less than the New, had an outward ceremony for the ordination of priests. (Exodus xxix.) With these few remarks, we must leave a profoundly obscure but deeply interesting subject.

663. *Sacramentals.*—The nature of the Christian Sacraments will be further illustrated if we consider certain rites in use in the Church, which have received the name of Sacramentals. We have seen (n. 661), that in early times the word Sacrament was used very widely, embracing a great variety of holy practices. The time came when it was seen that seven of these were distinguished from the rest by the possession of a peculiar sort of efficacy (n. 664), and then the word Sacrament was restricted to these seven. But other rites remained, which were something more than mere private practices of prayer or other virtue, and these have received the name of Sacramentals, which indicates that they have a certain likeness to the Seven, at the same time that they are wanting in the power of conferring the grace which they signify. (n. 662.)

No external rite can have the power of conferring grace except by the institution of God; there is no power in the Church to institute a Sacrament. But the Church possesses, and continually exercises the power of connecting grace with certain outward observances, in virtue of prayer offered by her ministers in her name; and whenever this is done, we have a Sacramental. Sacramentals therefore are indefinite in number, nor is it easy to reduce

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them to any limited number of heads. Five general classes are mentioned in a Latin line which is intended to help the memory of students (*Orans, tinctus, edens, confessus, dans, benedicens*): these are, prayer, washing, eating, confession, giving, and blessing. Thus, special efficacy attaches to prayer, more particularly to the Lord's Prayer, said in a church or chapel, and this because of the consecration of the place; as is illustrated by the beautiful Mass appointed to be said on each anniversary of the dedication; and the whole matter is set forth in the prayer made by King Solomon at the dedication of the new-built Temple at Jerusalem. (3 Kings viii. 22—53; and compare n. 369.) The most familiar Sacramental that comes under the head of washing is the ordinary Holy Water, always at hand in Catholic churches and houses, which has been blessed by a priest in the appointed form; the form enumerates the various favours which God is asked to grant whenever devout use is made of the element; and this prayer will not be made in vain.

The third class of Sacramentals includes the eating of a morsel of blessed bread which it is usual in some countries to distribute among the faithful who hear Mass, perhaps as a sort of compensation if they are unable to receive Holy Communion. The *Confiteor* said at the beginning of Mass, and on certain other prescribed occasions, is the confession which reckons as the fourth class; and the fifth consists in the distribution of alms which is sometimes done in the church and by persons appointed to the office. The sixth, or blessing, is of wider scope.

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To bless is an act of prayer. It may be prayer for the welfare of some person there present, or prayer for the welfare of all persons who use a blessed object in the proper way. By the practice of the faithful, a blessing can be given by any person to all who are subject to him, whatever be the nature of this subjection; thus in pious Catholic families, the children are trained to kneel and ask the blessing of their parents before retiring at night. Such prayer undoubtedly secures graces and favours; but blessings cannot be called Sacramentals, unless they are given in virtue of a commission from the Church, for it is the institution of the Church that distinguishes Sacramentals from private acts of virtue. The particular benefit to be derived from the devout use of a blessed object, such as beads or an Agnus Dei, may be gathered from the words of the prescribed form: as we said already in the case of Holy Water.

The use of the sign of the Cross is common in all acts of blessing, but it is not the essential part of the act; the essential part is the prayer, vocal or otherwise, which accompanies the motion of the hand.

As special cases of blessing, we may notice the rite of coronation of a King or Queen, which is a Sacramental: so is also the cutting of the hair by which a candidate is admitted to the clerical state. In some sacramental ceremonies, prayer is made that the power of Satan may be restrained through their use; in others, the petition is for temporal favours. Often an Indulgence (n. 771) is annexed to the use of a blessed object, and in this way some

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remission of punishment due to sin is secured: but the most common effect is that, in answer to the prayer of the Church, actual grace (n. 586) is obtained, and the acts of virtue done under its influence procure the pardon of venial sin. (n. 596.)

664. *The Number of the Sacraments.*—The Council of Trent (Sess. 7, can. 1; Denz. 726) defines that there are seven Sacraments of the New Law, neither more nor less. This proposition might be proved by going through the seven rites which we have enumerated, proving that each of these answers the description of what is meant by a Sacrament; and then showing that the same can be said of no other ceremonies. In the succeeding seven Treatises we shall establish the affirmative part of this argument, but in the present article we shall use a shorter and more instructive method.

Our adversaries on this point are the Protestants of all shades, who as usual agree only in opposition to the Catholic doctrine, and will not allow that the number of the Sacraments is seven; but they have by no means always been in agreement as to the number to be substituted. It will be enough for our purpose to quote two authentic utterances of the English Established Church on the subject, which will be seen to be consistent with a great variety of opinions.

In the Catechism, which forms part of the Book of Common Prayer, the question is asked: How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in His Church? and the answer is given with covert ambiguity: Two only as generally necessary to

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salvation; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. It will be observed that we are not told how many there may be which are not generally necessary. So far therefore there is nothing which may not be accepted even by a man who professes to hold all the doctrine of Trent; but if this man hold office in the Establishment, he has bound himself to the following statements which form part of the twenty-fifth among the Thirty-Nine Articles:

"There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel: that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have grown partly of a corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scripture, but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper; for they have not any visible Sign or ceremony ordained of God."

This Article is in clear opposition to the doctrine defined at Trent; we proceed to the proof of that doctrine.

665. *The Argument from Prescription.*—There is some doubt as to date of the earliest distinct affirmation that the Sacraments of the Church are seven in number, for questions arise as to the genuineness of certain documents. But it is beyond question that the Tridentine Seven, and these alone, were recognized in the middle of the twelfth century. Peter Lombard (n. 332), who lived at that time,

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enumerates them without any indication that he was teaching a novelty (Sentent. lib. iv. dist. 2): and from that time forward, his doctrine began to be accepted, and soon we hear nothing of any second opinion on the point, either in the West or in the East; the works of the Latin theologians are full of discussions concerning the Sacraments, but no hint is to be found of doubt as to the enumeration of them: and no question on the subject was heard of during the negotiations for the union which occupied the Fathers of the Council held at Lyons, in 1274, and at Florence, in 1439, though the Greek theologians raised all possible objections against the doctrine of Rome. As to the heretical sects of Nestorians (n. 507, iv.) and Monophysites (n. 507, v.), who broke away from Catholic unity in the course of the fifth century, it is difficult to speak affirmatively with confidence, owing to the defect of records: but this at least is certain, that these sects cannot be shown to have held any doctrine as to the number of the Sacraments differing from the doctrine of Trent.

The number seven was therefore in undisputed possession at least for four centuries before the outbreak of the Protestant Reformation: and on the principles which are established in the first volume of this work (nn. 83, 208), it follows that the doctrine is part of the revelation given by Christ; the Church of the fifteenth century could no more agree in teaching error, than could the Church of the first century. (n. 166.) Moreover, what we have said proves that the Tridentine doctrine was held at least

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a thousand years before the Council met: for the jealousies between East and West began early, and assuredly neither division borrowed any novelty in doctrine from the other; what both teach is therefore of older standing than the beginning of these jealousies; and this argument is strengthened if we hold, with many most competent authorities, that the sects of Eastern heretics can be proved to have agreed with the Catholics around them. A belief which was universal among Catholics in the days of St. Augustine must have a Divine origin, as this holy Doctor expresses it: Whatever is held by the whole Church, and was not introduced by any Council, but has always been maintained, must necessarily be held to rest on the authority of the Apostles. (*De Baptismo*, iv. 24, 31; *P.L.* 43, 174.) There is no trace in Church history, of any protest being raised against the doctrine that the Sacraments are seven in number, as being new, and yet Christians have always been jealously on the watch to guard against the introduction of novelties. The doctrine now held by all who reject the authority of the Tridentine Council, is certainly not apostolic nor traditional; it is a novelty no older than the sixteenth century; it is therefore a freshly introduced doctrine, resting on the authority of Luther or some of his contemporaries: it is therefore not to be received, unless the teacher produce his credentials as a Divine messenger: and this he is unable to do.

A difficulty is raised against our doctrine, founded on the words used by our Lord when He washed

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the feet of His disciples. (St. John xiii. 1—7.) It might seem that we here have a precept to use an outward ceremony, and that a special grace is promised as the result of obedience: and it might be hard to show that any of the conditions of a Sacrament are wanting. Our reply is that we trust the authority of the Church, our only guide in the interpretation of Scripture, and this authority assures us that the washing of feet is not one of the Sacraments of the Gospel. If any one feel sure that he can explain Holy Scripture without the aid of the Church, we leave him to find his own explanation of the difficulty. (See n. 107, iii.) The silence of Christian writers concerning the number of the Sacraments is a merely negative argument, and is pointless unless it be shown that the number ought to have heen mentioned. But in fact the word Sacrament was used very vaguely (n. 661), and it was the gradual work of theology to bring out the truth that seven of those ceremonies to which it was applied differed essentially from the rest. (n. 113.) Passages occur where two or more of what we now know to be Sacraments are enumerated, but in these cases it is not to the author's purpose to mention more; especially Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist, were usually conferred at the same time, and therefore are naturally mentioned together. Further, the reticence concerning the Sacraments, and especially as regards the Holy Eucharist, which was a necessary rule of prudence in early times (n. 661), continued to be usual, long after the reasons for it had ceased.

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666. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has presented a sketch of the nature of those rites to which the word Sacrament has long been appropriated. Their dignity is described in striking terms by the writers of the Church; the feature by which they differ from all other sacred rites is indicated, and will be more fully discussed hereafter (nn. 672, 673): it is shown that they were foreshadowed by certain rites in use before the coming of Christ, which, however, were without the special character which marks the Seven. After some few remarks on the wide subject of Sacramentals, the decree of Trent declaring the number of the Sacraments properly so-called is justified on Catholic principles by the irrefragable proof founded on prescription.

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CHAPTER II.

THE ACTION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

667. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the coming Treatises on the different Sacraments, we shall see that each produces an effect proper to itself, conveying to the soul the Sacramental grace. In the present chapter we shall point out what is the action common to all the Sacraments, or at least to two or more of them; after which we pass to the consideration of what is to be held concerning the mode of their action. As to this, we shall find that we have reached one of the principal points where Protestants have abandoned the Catholic faith; also, we shall find that Catholic schools are not in entire agreement among themselves, but await the judgment of the Church.

668. *First and Second Grace.*—It belongs to all the Sacraments to confer or augment habitual grace (n. 583, vi.) on all who receive them duly, provided there is no obstacle hindering this effect. Such obstacle may arise from the incapacity of the person who should receive the Sacrament, for certain conditions are required in the subject, as will be explained when we treat of the individual Sacraments: we shall find that some men are absolutely

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incapable of being the subjects of certain Sacraments; a person in health, for example, is incapable of receiving Extreme Unction, and a female cannot be ordained priest: so too, no Sacrament can be given validly to an unbaptized person. But there is another class of obstacle to the action of the Sacraments which is found in affection to sin, for God does not force His favours upon the unwilling. One, then, who is in the state of sin (n. 596), and who adheres to his sin and is not sorry for it, by this malicious will, hinders the inflow of grace upon his soul.

But the mercy of God has provided two Sacraments as means by which one who is in sin can obtain the forgiveness of his sin and his restoration to grace, provided he is willing to fulfil the conditions, of which the chief is that he grieves for the evil that he has done and is resolved by God's grace to sin no more. These Sacraments are Baptism and Penance. Baptism, which can be received once only, and to which infants may be admitted, is the appointed means of removing original sin, as well as all actual sin of which the subject may be guilty. Penance forgives the actual sin of such as have already been admitted to the fold of the Church. The primary purpose of these two Sacraments is therefore to bring persons from the state of sin to the state of grace, and this is expressed by saying that they are instituted in order to convey the First Grace. When a Sacrament, whatever it be, is received by one who is already in the state of grace, it gives an increase of habitual grace (n. 638), and

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this increase is called the Second Grace. Those Sacraments which are instituted to give the First Grace are called Sacraments of the Dead, because applicable to persons whose souls are dead in sin: the other Sacraments are distinguished as Sacraments of the Living.

If one who is in the state of sin knowingly receive a Sacrament of the Living, not only does he gain no grace by the act, but he is guilty of a sin of sacrilege, by his irreverent treatment of a holy thing. But mistakes may be made: no one can have absolute certainty as to his spiritual state (n. 639); he may in good faith believe that he is in grace, whereas in truth he is in sin. This may happen in various ways: for instance, he may know that he has sinned grievously, but believe that he has been absolved, whereas the person who pronounced the words was no priest, but a layman who assumed to do a work for which he is incompetent. (n. 776.) A question, therefore, may arise as to the result of a Sacrament being received by one who is thus situated. It is certain that such a one does not incur the guilt of sacrilege, for there is no known violation of the law of God, and there is no guilt without deliberation which includes the knowledge of the law. (n. 596.) But whether the rite performed under these circumstances confers any spiritual benefit on the recipient is uncertain: theologians are not completely agreed whether the Sacraments of the Living can exceptionally, and accidentally as it is called, confer the First Grace. Perhaps no one doubts that Extreme Unction has this power, for

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the words of St. James (v. 15) concerning it are too strong to admit of question. (n. 783.) Cardinal de Lugo, whose authority stands very high, does not see reason to believe that the same is true of any other Sacrament: but the authority of Suarez is equally high, and his conclusion is that what is admitted as to Extreme Unction may be extended to the Holy Eucharist and all the Sacraments; and his opinion is now commonly adopted. The argument in its favour is that the Fathers speak of the Eucharist as removing sin, healing our wounds, cleansing the soul from stain: these expressions are scarcely consistent with the belief that the Sacrament may be received sinlessly and yet fail to work a good effect in the soul: wherefore, St. Thomas (p. 3. q. 79. a. 3.) teaches expressly that the remission of mortal sin is among the effects of the reception of the Eucharist, either as its direct effect, or as enabling the recipient to make an act of perfect contrition. (n. 756.) This great Doctor holds the same concerning Confirmation (p. 3. q. 72. a. 7. ad. 2.); and there is no serious doubt that what is true of the Eucharist and of Confirmation is to be held also concerning the remaining Sacraments of Orders and Matrimony.

One general argument avails for all the Sacraments equally. The Council of Trent (Sess. 7, can. 6, *De Sacram.*; Denz. 731) teaches that all the Sacraments of the New Law infallibly confer grace on those who do not offer an obstacle to the grace: but he who being in sin receives a Sacrament of the Living in good faith and with sorrow for all his sins,

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cannot be said to offer any obstacle to grace; and it follows that he is restored to the state of grace. This, at least, is the argument in favour of the view held by Suarez: his opponents remark that possibly the presence of unconscious mortal sin may itself be an obstacle.

669. *Unfruitful Reception.*—If a Sacrament is received sacrilegiously by one who is and knows himself to be in mortal sin, it certainly does not confer any spiritual profit: it increases the damnation of him that is guilty of the sin. But a question arises as to whether such a Sacrament can have a beneficial effect at a future time, if he who has committed the sin come to be restored to the state of grace. Does the Sacrament revive? This is the ordinary form of putting the question, but it is not very suitable, for in the case supposed the Sacrament has never lived, or put forth any activity: it was dead from the moment it came into existence, and if afterwards it be living, this is not a revival but a beginning of life. But the word is convenient and will not mislead, and therefore we shall use it.

Vasquez and a few others deny that any of the Sacraments can revive: but it is the common doctrine that Baptism will do so. Suppose, then, an adult who is not only in original sin, but has also been guilty of actual mortal sins and is far from having any sorrow for these sins or purpose of amendment: such a one may be led by some low motive to receive Baptism. Of course this Baptism will not put him into the state of grace, although it impresses the baptismal character on his soul, in

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virtue of which the Sacrament cannot be repeated; and this is true also of Confirmation and Orders received in the state of sin. But suppose, further, that he who has been thus baptized afterwards repents of all his sin, and gains the favour of God: the common opinion of divines is that he at the same time gains the graces which correspond to the Sacrament, which through his malice was unfruitful at the time that he received it. The same is probable in regard to the other Sacraments, with the exception of the Holy Eucharist and Penance. It is not probable that sacrilegious Communions are profitable even when grace is regained. As to Penance, the question will be further considered in our Treatise on that Sacrament. It will be observed that these two Sacraments differ from the rest in this, that the opportunity of receiving occurs frequently, whereas of the other five, three cannot be repeated, and the other two only at comparatively long intervals, if at all.

670. *Sacramental Grace.*—We have said (n. 667) that when we speak of the individual Sacraments we shall point out what grace is given by each, as distinguished from what is given by all in common, of which we have just been speaking. This Sacramental grace, as it is called, is sometimes conceived as being a distinct habit infused into the soul, making it apt to receive actual graces suited to the spiritual need which the Sacrament is ordained to supply. But this view is not necessary: and it is better to regard the habit of charity (n. 643) as serving all purposes; and the actual graces spoken

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of are given to the soul which has this habit, on account of the Sacrament that has been received. Whichever view is taken, the result is the same: the man who has confessed a particular class of sin with sorrow and purpose of amendment, and has been duly absolved, will receive a peculiar supply of actual graces helping him more readily to resist future temptations to that sin; and this is true, whether we regard these graces as due to a particular habit in his soul, or to the state of grace in which he is.

671. *Sacramental Character.*—The Fathers teach doctrines peculiar to the three Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. They teach that these three Sacraments, unlike the rest, can be received only once (n. 690); also, they teach that these three imprint on the soul of the recipient an ineffaceable mark; and they regard these two truths as so connected that each affords a proof of the other. This doctrine is defined by the Council of Trent (Sess. 7, *De Sacram.* can. 9; Denz. 734), and the argument from prescription, by which we proved the number of the Sacraments, is available in the present matter also. (n. 665.) This indelible mark is called the Sacramental Character, which Greek word signifies something carved or engraven on wood or stone. The same spiritual thing is also called a seal, as if the mark in the soul might be compared to the impression made by the graven gem upon the wax. In both cases we see that the impression is permanent, and not merely transient.

The doctrine of the Church enables us to give a

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full interpretation to certain passages of St. Paul, which might otherwise be obscure. Thus, the Apostle speaks of God as having sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts (2 Cor. i. 21); also, in Christ we were signed with the Holy Spirit of promise. (Ephes. i. 13; see also iv. 30.) Knowing that in Confirmation the Holy Spirit is given to us, and that in the same Sacrament our soul is impressed with a seal, indicating that we are of the number of the confirmed, we cannot fail to see that St. Paul had this truth in his mind when he wrote the above passages.

The character may be considered as the badge indicating the function in the army of Christ to which each person has been admitted; not however that it can be removed like a badge, for when once received it remains in the soul to all eternity. We may think that the soldiers in the army of the King are branded with a brand which is a mark of honour and not of disgrace; which remains to his greater confusion even if one become a traitor and join the ranks of the enemy. We have no need to enter further into the discussions that have taken place concerning the nature of the sacramental character.

672. *Action of the Sacraments.*—The points of faith that we have been explaining of late are scarcely in dispute, for they are all in a manner included in the question as to the mode of action of the Sacraments, which is one of the chief differences between the Catholic system and all other Western forms of Christianity. The doctrine of the Church is that the Sacraments of the New Law

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have a peculiar virtue, so that they are in a manner instruments through which grace is conferred upon men who place no obstacle in the way, by force of the sensible sign and external sacred rite, when used in accordance with the institution of Christ. According to this doctrine, the Sacrament itself gives grace, independently of any act of the recipient, except so far as acts of his are needed to remove impediments in the way of grace, or as conditions which are necessary to the Sacrament.

It is difficult to say what is the ordinary doctrine on this subject held by Protestants: but probably there are few sects among them that regard the Sacraments which they use as more than reminders, leading the recipient to make salutary acts of faith, hope, and other virtues; and of course many will not admit as much as this. The Catechism of the Church of England declares that a Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and as a pledge to assure us thereof. The twenty-fifth of the Thirty-Nine Articles, which we have already quoted in part (n. 664), has the following definition:

"Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's will towards us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him."

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It would seem that the framers of this Article designedly used language which might plausibly be represented as consistent with the old doctrine in which the people had been brought up, at the same time that it was more naturally understood as meaning that a Sacrament was no more than a memorial. But we may leave it to those concerned to explain and reconcile the expressions used, and to show how a Sacrament of the character described can be administered to an infant, who is incapable of faith to be quickened, strengthened, and confirmed.

The proof of the Catholic doctrine is found in Scripture, in all places where the Sacraments are spoken of. The rite is treated as the instrument by means of which grace is given. Thus, water is the instrument by which the body is cleansed from defilement, and in the same way Baptism washes away sin. (Acts xxii. 16.) The Church is cleansed by the laver, or washing, of water in the word of life. (Ephes. v. 25.) The grace of God was in St. Timothy by the imposition of the hands of St. Paul, by whom he had been consecrated Bishop. (2 Timothy i. 6.) Other such passages may be found. (St. John iii. 5; Acts ii. 38; Titus iii. 5, &c.) In all these, there is no hint of any cause of grace except the external rite, and this rite is not spoken of as giving occasion to any acts of the recipient. The rite itself produces the effect.

We need not spend time in citing passages of the Fathers which teach our doctrine on the mode of action of the Sacraments, for our adver-

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saries are they who do not admit the force of the argument from tradition.

673. *Opus Operatum.*—There is a famous phrase which is employed to express concisely the Catholic doctrine: the Sacraments are said to work "by the work wrought." This is opposed to the doctrine that their effect comes about "by the work of the worker"—*ex opere operato, ex opere operantis.* Some half-learned Latin grammarians maintain that the first phrase ought to be translated, "by the work that works." These critics forget that every word means that which it is intended to mean by him who uses it; and even on their narrow ground of Latin grammar they are wrong, for there are plenty of cases where the participle of a deponent verb is used passively, as may be seen in any good dictionary. (See *dominor, ulciscor,* &c.) This very word *operatum* is so employed by Lactantius (*De Instit. Divin.* vii. 27; *P.L.* 6, 819), and by St. Ambrose (*De Incarn.* c. 9, n. 95; *P.L.* 16, 841), so that the theological use does not involve a blunder in an elementary point of grammar.

The phrase in question, *opus operatum,* seems to have been first used by Peter of Poitou, a writer of the twelfth century (Sent. p. 5, c. 6; *P.L.* 211, 1235), who says that the action of the minister who baptizes is the work that works, but that the Baptism itself is the work wrought, so to speak: where the closing words seem to show that the phrase was not yet in established use. However, it made its way into the common language of theology, partly through the influence of Pope Innocent III.,

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who saw how aptly it expressed the Catholic doctrine (*De Myst. Missæ*, iii. 5; *P.L.* 217, 844), and finally received the sanction of the Council of Trent. (See n. 211.)

The *work wrought* that confers grace is not the action of him that receives the Sacrament, which would be designated as the *work of the worker*, not as the *work wrought*. Nor again is the *work wrought* the external rite, independently of the internal acts of the recipient, for such acts are often needed as conditions (n. 438), although they have no power of conferring grace. Nor does the *work wrought* produce its effect in such sense as to exclude the action of God, as if He had no part in the work beyond His ordinary conservation and concurrence (n. 438); as if the merely material action had a spiritual effect, such as is attributed to the charms of magicians. (n. 455.) The true sense is that the Holy Spirit (n. 421, vii.) uses the sacramental action as His instrument for conferring grace, which instrument is powerless unless it be put in action by the principal agent. The Divine promise involved in the institution of the Sacrament gives us assurance that this instrument always will be used by God when the sacramental rite is duly performed; but this promise does not give any efficacy to the rite itself, independently of the will of God to use it.

674. *Physical and Moral Causation.*—The doctrine that we have explained as to the action of the Sacraments and the *Opus Operatum* is the defined faith of the Church, on which all Catholics agree.

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How complete is this agreement is illustrated by the history of the controversy which has arisen touching the mode in which the Sacraments cause grace; whether they are physical causes or moral. This point would never be disputed except among men who agreed that they were true efficient causes, and not mere occasions. (n. 438.) Our notice of the controversy must necessarily be very brief. Those who are able to go more deeply into it will perhaps find that the dispute concerns rather the true import of the terms "physical" and "moral," and not the view taken as to the mode of causation. The doctrine that the causation is moral has the support of the whole Scotist (n. 361) school, while the Thomists maintain the opposite view. The Jesuit theologians are divided; Suarez, Bellarmine, and others, agree with the Thomists, Vasquez and De Lugo with the Scotists; as does also Cardinal Franzelin, perhaps the most influential writer of modern times, who deals with these subjects.

It is to be observed that the question concerns the fact, and not the possibility. The question whether God could raise an external rite so as to make it become a physical cause of grace is distinct from the question whether this was the course which He was pleased to adopt in instituting the Sacraments. The affirmative answer is given by the advocates of physical causation, and the burden lies on them of proving their point. The Scotists maintain that this proof is not forthcoming. The passages of Scripture concerning the causality of the Sacraments do not necessarily convey more

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than moral causation, and therefore cannot be pressed into the service of the Thomists. The language of the Fathers on the subject is not sufficiently precise and uniform to be esteemed conclusive on either side. We are therefore left to theological reason to settle the point. As to this, it is noticeable that there is great discrepancy among the accounts given of that elevation of the rite into a physical cause of grace, which is spoken of by the one party to the dispute; besides which, they find it difficult to reply to a positive argument in favour of moral causation, founded on the possibility of a Sacrament being received under circumstances where no physical action seems to be possible. It is certain that the Sacrament of Matrimony is received when two fit persons enter into the Christian contract of marriage (n. 811); also, it is certain that this contract, like other contracts, may be entered into by the agency of procurators, in the absence of the parties. The rite therefore is the expression of the consents by the procurators; and it is against all conceptions that we can form of the nature of physical causation to suppose that this rite physically causes grace in the absent and unconscious parties. There is no difficulty in the way of attributing to it a power of moral causation, by which it moves the will of God, inclining Him to give the grace; for the absence of the parties from the scene of the ceremony is no hindrance to this Divine action.

These and other reasons incline most modern writers to hold that the Scotist doctrine of moral

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causation is to be preferred to the rival Thomist view which upholds physical causation.

675. *Recapitulation.*—In this chapter we have explained that all the Sacraments confer or increase habitual grace, if they be duly received, and we have discussed the questions that arise, when a Sacrament is received by one who is without the requisite dispositions to profit by it. After some account of sacramental grace and the sacramental character, the proof from Scripture is given that the Sacraments truly cause grace, with the explanation of the phrase used to denote this causation. Finally, the controversy as to physical and moral causation is touched upon.

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CHAPTER III.

REQUISITES OF THE SACRAMENTS.

676. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In every individual Sacrament, there is some thing which constitutes what is called the matter of that Sacrament, and there are certain words uttered, which determine the matter as being applied to a particular person, and which are called the form. There is also a person who receives the Sacrament, and is called the subject: and there is a person who utters the form, and who is called the minister. The subject and the minister are usually distinct persons, but not necessarily so in all the Sacraments: in Matrimony the contracting parties are the ministers and also the recipients of the Sacrament (n. 811), and the same is true whenever a priest says Mass and receives the Sacred Host which he himself has consecrated.

In the present chapter we shall speak of the subject, the matter and the form of the Sacraments and of the minister: but first we shall prove that they all have Christ for their Author.

677. *The Author of the Sacraments.*—It is of course beyond doubt that all the Sacraments have their life-giving power from God. No material rite

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could become able to confer grace except through an act of the Divine will, for the distribution of grace, the forgiveness of sins, adoption to the rank of sons of God, are matters wholly beyond the powers natural to any mere creature. Not even Christ, considered as Man, has power to institute a Sacrament; but Christ, considered as the Son of God made Man, has this power, and indeed the power belongs to Him by a peculiar right. Christ redeemed all men by His Death (n. 543), made satisfaction for the sins of all the world, and merited grace for the race whose nature He assumed; and in consequence, He has an *excelling* power, as theologians speak, to institute Sacraments as instruments by which the grace earned for men is applied to individuals. Christ is the Head of the Church (n. 540, iii.), the High Priest and Mediator of the New Testament (n. 540, ix.), all which functions imply that He has this excelling power, in accordance with His own words, by which He, as it were, declared His prerogative when He instituted Christian Baptism: "All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth." (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.)

So far there is no difference of opinion among theologians, and in fact the Council of Trent expressly defines that all the Sacraments of the New Law were instituted by Christ. (Sess. 7, can. 1, *De Sacram.;* Denz. 726.) But questions arise as to the extent of power in the Church to modify the matter and form of the Sacraments, by exacting something more precise than was contained in the original institution; also, as to whether the excelling power

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of Christ was necessarily exercised by Him immediately, or whether it was delegated to the Apostles or other men, or at least might have been so delegated. The first of these questions, concerning the power of the Church, will be dealt with more conveniently when we speak of the different cases where it arises. (nn. 688, 700, 795.) The last, as to the absolute possibility of a mere creature being so raised as to have the power of instituting Sacraments, is too subtle to be profitably discussed by us here; but we will give the reasons which lead to the belief that in fact the institution was in all cases the immediate work of Christ, and that no such power has been granted to the Church. These reasons chiefly rest upon the Tridentine Canon which was lately quoted. This definition of the Council would be pointless if it meant no more than that the Sacraments were instituted by the authority of Christ, for this never was, nor could be, in dispute; those therefore who uphold the possibility of mediate institution depart from the natural meaning of the words of the Canon, with the result that they deprive it of all force. Again, the Council distinguishes between the substance and the ceremonies of the Sacraments, denying to the Church all power over the former while allowing it as to the latter: since, the power of the Church over the ceremonies belongs to her only by delegation from Christ, it seems to follow that she has not even delegated power over the substance; and that still less could she institute an entirely new Sacrament. Weight is added to these arguments by the fact that there is no trace

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of any exercise by the Church of the authority which we deny to her; no doubt can be raised except with regard to Extreme Unction, and as we shall see, the Council has defined that this Sacrament was instituted by Christ. (n. 783.)

678. *The Subject of the Sacraments.*—No one can receive a Sacrament who is not a living man, for no others can be members of that visible Church on earth which has been entrusted with the Sacraments. The living man begins to exist at the instance when the rational soul is created and infused into the body, which event has certainly occurred at some time between conception and birth, although we cannot assign the precise instant. (n. 473.) In like manner, we can say that death takes place when the soul is separated from the body; but it is impossible to feel sure that this separation takes place at the instant of what may be called physical death, after which no vital action is naturally possible: the truth may be that the time of probation is not over until after the lapse of some time, perhaps even an hour or more after the emission of the last breath.

This may be a convenient place to notice an obscure text, in which St. Paul has been thought by some to refer to a belief that even dead men were susceptible of Baptism. It occurs in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. (xv. 29.) The Apostle is arguing in favour of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and asks: Otherwise, what shall they do that are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not again at all? Why are they then baptized for them? From this it seems clear that

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a ceremony was used which was called Baptism for the Dead, and which was believed to have beneficial effects, which would be lost if the dead do not rise again. The persons to whom St. Paul was writing, no doubt, knew perfectly well what ceremony was meant, and what benefits were expected to spring from it; but no tradition has survived upon the subject, and so we are left to conjecture. A multitude of guesses have been made. Some commentators think that the word "dead" is used improperly, and that the Apostle speaks of ordinary Christian Baptism, as if "for the dead" meant the rite instituted by Christ, who died on the Cross and rose again; or they suggest that "the dead" may be dead works, sins, which Baptism washes away; or that Baptism was administered on the tombs of the martyrs; all which views have no kind of basis, and are inconsistent with the word "for" which is equivalent to "on behalf of." (ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν.) Others see a reference to the practice which undoubtedly prevailed (n. 691) of deferring Baptism till death was close at hand, but it is hard to tell what is the precise meaning of the text on this supposition. A figurative meaning is given to the word Baptism when used by our Lord to signify His Passion (St. Mark x. 38); and St. Paul has been thought to give a similar extension of meaning to the word, and to use it for penances and satisfactory works offered by the living on behalf of the departed, and possibly the word may have been in common use among the Corinthians in this sense; but it is highly improbable. If both the leading

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words are used properly, it may be that some of the people addressed had fallen into the error which prevailed among some Gnostic sects, of supposing that the acts of the living could work the effects of Baptism even in the dead, and that the Apostle founds an argument on this erroneous belief. Some feel that he is not likely to have lent even the smallest countenance to a gross error by omitting to protest against it, and they have suggested that possibly by Divine dispensation some such rite may have really availed; a suggestion, however, which has no probability.

The latest Catholic commentator on the Epistle is Father Cornely, and he tells us that he has chosen such explanations as are least improbable; among them are those which we have given, from which the reader may judge of the character of some others that have found supporters. Father Cornely seems inclined to think that perhaps the surviving relatives of a catechumen who died before receiving Baptism may have gone through some public symbolical ceremony, by way of protest that their friend had desired to be a Christian: there is no objection to this explanation except that it is not suggested by positive testimony.

679. *The Intention of the Recipient.*—The subject of a Sacrament must in general have some kind of intention to receive the benefit; but it will be convenient to explain certain distinctions which must be made on the matter. The full discussion belongs to Moral Theology; we shall be content with stating the results arrived at by approved

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authors, whose reasons are often founded on the practice of the Church.

An infant or idiot who neither has, nor ever had, the use of his senses can be baptized, not validly alone, but also licitly, as will be proved in our next Treatise. (n. 691.) The same is true of Confirmation. Also they can validly receive the Blessed Eucharist, and in the Eastern Church the rite is still in use which formerly prevailed also in the West, that a consecrated Particle is given to every infant who is baptized; but this practice is not now lawful in the West. Further, they can validly receive the Sacrament of Order, but such an ordination would, it is needless to say, be grievously unlawful. If an infant be ordained and grow to years of discretion, he is allowed to make his choice on arriving at the age of sixteen; he may either accept what has been done and exercise the Order that he has received, in which case he is bound to celibacy and to the recitation of the Divine Office, like other priests; or he may renounce it, and then is free from the particular obligations of the priesthood, but can never lawfully use his Order.

As to those who once had the use of their senses but have now lost it, these can certainly receive Baptism and Extreme Unction, if they previously desired to do so, and these Sacraments would be both valid and licit. If they knew of the Sacraments and plainly expressed their desire, there is no difficulty; and there are some writers who think that it is enough if they have sorrow for sin

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and the wish that all should be done to them which will enable them to save their souls, so that in such circumstances it would be lawful to give these Sacraments to the man who lies insensible and at the point of death. There is a dogmatic question which will come before us hereafter, whether the same is true of the Sacrament of Penance.

Those who have the use of reason do not receive any Sacrament validly unless they have the actual intention of being subjects of the sacred rite, or at least have had such an intention which still influences them, and is called virtual. It is not necessary that they should recognize the sacramental character of the rite which they go through, and therefore when baptized Protestants contract a valid marriage they receive the Sacrament. On the other hand, if any man consumed consecrated Hosts merely to satisfy his hunger, he would not receive the Holy Eucharist.

Some more remarks on this subject will occur when we speak of the different Sacraments.

680. *Matter and Form.*—All physical things can be shown to be compounded of two elements which go by the name of matter and form: the matter being that which is indifferent whether it exists as one thing or another; the form determining the matter to be some particular thing. The full development of these ideas must be sought in philosophical treatises on Cosmology (see Haan, *Philosophia Naturalis*, and n. 714), but the meaning will be readily understood from an example. A mass of clay is indifferent whether it exists as a plate or

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as a cup, but the skill of the potter determines which it is to be; the clay is the matter to which the potter gives a particular form; it will be observed that the popular use of the word *form* in this instance is identical with the use in philosophy. The same idea is extended to immaterial things: for instance, the intellect of man is capable of receiving whatever knowledge comes to it, and when it receives a particular truth, this truth is considered as a form of the intellect: hence, the word information.

Early in the thirteenth century, when the doctrine of the Sacraments received scholastic treatment, it became usual to employ the words matter and form in discussions on the subject; and this usage is now thoroughly established, and has the sanction of the Council of Trent. (Sess. 14, cap. 3; Denz. 776.) Especially it was recognized that the determination of the matter and form in each case was a convenient way of discussing what is requisite for the validity of each Sacrament, and the result will be seen in our successive Treatises: if a practical doubt arise, it will be solved, if necessary, by the Holy See. The matter and form in ordinary use with the sanction of the Church, are certainly valid, for were it otherwise she would have failed in an essential part of her work, and this is impossible (n. 166); and no other matter or form can lawfully be used, except in case of necessity. If doubtful matter is used, the validity of the Sacrament remains doubtful, and if possible, steps must be taken to change the doubt into a certainty by a repetition of the Sacrament. (See nn. 690, 739.)

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The Sacraments are instituted for men, and the question of the validity of particular matter is to be determined by the ordinary judgment of men. For instance, part of the matter of the Eucharist is wine, and a doubt may sometimes arise whether a particular liquid is wine, or whether it has undergone a change and become vinegar. This question is to be settled according to the judgment of men in general, and it does not depend entirely upon the result of the application of scientific tests. The chemist may answer the question truly according to the teachings of his science; but the meaning which he attaches to the word "wine" may be at once wider and narrower than the meaning attached to it by the world at large.

For the same reason, the mode in which the matter and the form are joined must be judged of according to the estimation of men: they must be so united as to form what ordinary men would esteem to be one action. It is easy to put cases where the moral union is certainly wanting; if, for instance, a person pours water on to a child, and waits till the next day to utter the baptismal form, there is certainly no valid Sacrament; but it is impossible to say what is the shortest interval which would be inconsistent with the needful union.

681. *The Ceremonies of the Sacraments.*—All difficulty is avoided by strict adherence to the laws of the Church concerning the ceremonies of the Sacraments. That the Church has power to make laws on this subject, which are binding on the conscience

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of all her ministers, is doctrine defined by the Council of Trent. (Sess. 7, can. 13; Denz. 737.) St. Paul exercised this power, when he gave the Corinthians many directions concerning the Blessed Eucharist, and added, The rest will I set in order when I come (1 Cor. xi. 34); and the practice was so familiar in the Church that St. Augustine was able to designate any questioning about it as a most unusual form of insanity. (Epist. 54, *Ad Januar.* c. 5, n. 6; *P.L.* 33, 202.) Reverence for these sublime mysteries requires that the rites accompanying them should be arranged wisely and not left to the whim of the moment, and they ought to be such as to give symbolical instruction in the meaning of the Sacrament. They should be suited to rouse the faith and piety of the people; and it is no small advantage that they serve as an outward token of the difference between Catholics and heretics, or at least lead to homage being paid to the majesty of the Church when those who do not submit to her authority borrow from her ceremonies.

682. *The Minister.*—Every Sacrament requires a living human being as its minister. We read in the lives of St. Stanislaus Kostka and other saints that they received Holy Communion at the hand of an Angel; but in this case the minister of the Sacrament is the priest who said the Mass at which the Host was consecrated. In the Sacrament of Baptism, no qualification is needed in the minister beyond that just stated; also any couple of baptized persons who are capable of intermarriage can administer the Sacrament of Matrimony to each other: the

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qualification needed by the ministers of the other Sacraments will be given hereafter.

Persons who have wished to find excuse for withdrawing themselves from the authority of the living, hierarchical Church (n. 189), have from time to time maintained that no Sacrament can be validly administered unless by one who is in the state of grace. Since the presence of grace in the soul is not visible, this doctrine entirely upsets the constitution of the Church. (n. 168.) The Catholic doctrine that habitual grace is not required for the valid administration of the Sacraments was asserted against the Donatists by St. Augustine (n. 133); by Innocent III. against the Albigenses; by Pope Martin V. against Wyclif, and finally by the Council of Trent against the heretics of the sixteenth century. (Sess. 7, can. 12; Denz. 736.) The theological reason for this truth of faith is that Christ Himself is the principal Minister of all the Sacraments; the human agent does not give the grace, and therefore there is no room for the argument that no one can give what he does not possess. The Fathers compare one who administers Sacraments when himself in sin, to a sower who scatters the seed from unclean hands: to water that finds its way through pipes of iron: to the seal formed of base metal, but which impresses on the wax the image of a king: to a physician who can heal a sufferer, though himself a prey to disease.

These same arguments show that true faith is not requisite in the minister of a Sacrament, as is defined in the case of Baptism (Trent, Sess. 7, can. 4;

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Denz. 741); the same is certainly true in the case of the remaining six. As to Baptism, the point was decided on occasion of the controversy raised in the time of St. Cyprian, when that holy Doctor fell into innocent error (n. 100), until instructed in the truth by Pope St. Stephen. It follows that a sacramental rite administered by a heretic is no less valid than if the minister were a Catholic. If ever the Church treats such a ceremony as possibly not having sacramental efficacy, the reason is that she has reason to doubt whether the rite used contained the essential matter and form, or suspects that the minister was wanting in the necessary qualification, or that he had not the necessary intention: and if she treats it as certainly null, she believes that one at least of these defects existed.

We must now explain what intention is needed in the minister.

683. *The Intention of the Minister.*—The Council of Trent (Sess. 7, *De Sacram.* can. 11; Denz. 735) condemns all who deny that the minister of the Sacraments must have at least the intention of doing what the Church does. This declaration seems absurd in the eyes of those who do not admit the Catholic doctrine as to the action of the Sacraments (n. 672), but who prefer to hold that the actions performed are mere empty symbols and the words spoken are nothing but exhortations. But it follows from the paragraph just quoted that the sacramental action is the action of Christ, and the human minister is the deputy of the Divine Head of the Church, and must act in that character: the

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action of the man is in itself indifferent, and is done by him on his own behalf or on behalf of Christ, as may be determined by the act of his will: this act is what is called his intention. If the act is performed without any intention at all, as by an idiot or a somnambulist, then it is not a human act, proceeding from the intellect and the will (n. 585), and it cannot have sacramental efficacy (n. 681); if it be done with the explicit intention of not performing the act which the Church does, then the minister is acting on his own account, and not as the deputy of Christ, and therefore there is no Sacrament. (See n. 739.)

The intention of doing what the Church does is not necessarily an explicit intention of doing an action that is efficacious of grace, for we have seen that the validity of the Sacrament does not depend on the faith of the minister (n. 682); a general intention of performing the rite in use among Christians is sufficient.

It is objected to this doctrine that it makes the validity of every Sacrament depend upon a purely internal fact, namely, the intention of the minister who may perform the outward acts with the interior intention of not acting as deputy of Christ. We admit the consequence, but deny that there is anything in it out of harmony with other parts of revealed doctrine; it is perfectly true that, without special revelation, no one can have absolute certainty that he has received a Sacrament or that he is in the state of grace (n. 639): but his assurance on the subject may approach so nearly to this absolute

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certainty as to make any misgiving on the subject foolish and vain; and it must always be remembered that God, who has bound Himself to give grace when the Sacraments are duly received, has nowhere limited His power, disabling Himself from giving grace apart from these holy rites. One, therefore, who acts in good faith may hope that no disaster will befall himself or those dear to him through the deceit of a wicked minister. (See n. 696.)

The reply just given to the difficulty about the uncertainty of the Sacraments seems perfectly sufficient; but there have been theologians who, not being content with it, maintain the possibility of having absolute certainty that a Sacrament has been validly administered; and thus making some approach to the Lutheran assurance of the presence of habitual grace in the soul. This doctrine attracted attention at the time of the Council of Trent, being put forward by the Italian theologian, Ambrose Catharinus, who avowed that he was influenced by a desire to secure peace of mind to the faithful; but one who feels a wish that a doctrine should be true may be suspected of not being a fair judge of the arguments bearing on it. The decree of the Council left the question open, and it is still debated, although the followers of Catharinus grow fewer in number and authority as time goes on.

In the view of Catharinus, no other intention is required in the minister of a Sacrament than that he should deliberately go through the outward acts required by the rite; and this is held to be sufficient, though the minister have no interior intention of

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doing what the Church does, and even if he interiorly form an explicit act of not intending so to do. But this theory fails to secure the absolute certainty that the Sacrament is valid, for it is easy for the minister to change the words of the form (n. 680) in an essential particular without this fraud being detected. The theory, therefore, does not possess that advantage which was its chief recommendation, and it is open to grievous theological difficulties. The man who does not at least implicitly intend to act as agent for Christ cannot do so, for the character of his action depends on his intention; the words of the Council are most naturally applicable to the internal intention, and it is certain that this suffices; for if the matter and form of Baptism be duly applied to a child by one who interiorly intends to perform the Christian rite, the Baptism is valid, even though the minister pretend exteriorly that he went through the ceremony in mockery: and lastly, if the priest saying Mass intends to consecrate ten Hosts and no more, but has eleven before him, then not one is validly consecrated, as is declared in the rubrics of the Missal. (*De Defectu Intentionis.*) For these and other similar reasons, most modern theologians reject the doctrine that the exterior intention is sufficient, but they confess that it has not been condemned by the authority of the Church.

Pope Alexander VIII., in 1690, condemned the following proposition (n. 28; Denz. 1185): A Baptism is valid which is conferred by a minister who observes all the external rite and form of baptizing; but who interiorly in his heart is

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resolved, I do not intend to do what the Church does. Pope Benedict XIV. (*De Synod Dioeces.* 7, 4, 8) observes that this condemnation inflicts a grave wound on the doctrine of Catharinus, and the wound would indeed be fatal, if the proposition be understood as dealing with a Baptism to which no objection could be raised except that specified; but it may be understood even of the case where the ceremony is performed in open and obvious mockery of the Christian rite, in which case it would be certainly invalid as wanting both the interior and the exterior intention; and since all these condemnations must be understood in the strictest sense, the matter is still undecided by authority.

684. *Recapitulation.*—The truths established in this chapter as to the requisites of the Sacraments in regard to the recipient, the rite, and the minister, follow easily from our doctrine respecting the mode of action of the Sacraments, which has been established already. The domestic question which we treated in the last paragraph as to the sufficiency of a purely external intention in the minister is the only point on which serious controversy is possible, when once the nature of a Sacrament as held in the Catholic Church is grasped.

685. *Close of the Treatise.*—This Treatise has explained, so far as seemed necessary, the nature and conditions of those peculiarly Christian rites, the Sacraments. We have been concerned throughout with matter that depends entirely upon the free-will of God, who has bound Himself to give His grace as often as certain conditions are fulfilled,

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while He has left Himself unfettered in dealing with cases where these conditions are inculpably neglected. The matter is positive throughout, depending wholly on the free institution of God, and *à priori* reasoning as to what is likely to have been established cannot be admitted. The sole reason on each point is that such is the will of the Author of the Sacraments.

The matter of this Treatise occupies seven questions in the *Summa* of St. Thomas. (p. 3. qq. 60—66.)

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Treatise the Sixteenth.

Baptism.

686. *Subject of the Treatise.*—In this Treatise, which does not require division into chapters, we shall speak of the nature, requisites, and effects of Baptism.

687. *Nature of Baptism.*—Baptism, in which man is born again of water and the Holy Ghost, is the first among the Christian Sacraments. It is the first in time, for, as we shall see, no other Sacrament can be received except by those who have the baptismal character. (n. 671.) It is the most necessary, for without Baptism of water, or at least its equivalent (nn. 694, 695), none can enter Heaven. Also, it is first in its nature, for it is a new birth, and the beginning of the spiritual life.

The Fathers have seen types of this Sacrament in almost all places where water is mentioned in the Old Testament; for they point out that water is perpetually represented (Genesis i. 2, 20, ii. 10; Exodus xiv. 22, xv. 25, xvii. 1, &c.) as endowed with virtue to work effects above its nature. They give to the Sacrament the name of Baptism or washing (*βάπτω*), and call it the Sacrament of the Trinity,

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in whose Name it is conferred, of grace, of the new birth, of illumination.

Baptism may be defined to be the Sacrament instituted by Christ in which man is spiritually born again by the outward washing of the body, with invocation of the Blessed Trinity.

688. *Matter of Baptism.*—Christ said to Nicodemus (St. John iii. 5), "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God;" and in pursuance of the command here implied, an initiatory rite, in which water plays a part, is used by the Church, and probably by all Christian communities. The necessity of water being at hand when a Christian convert was to be received, is implied in the narratives read in the Acts of the Apostles (viii. 36, x. 47); and history shows that the usage has been constant.

Water is therefore the *remote* matter of the Sacrament; the *proximate* matter is the application of the water to the subject. This may indisputably be done by immersion, which, in fact, was the ordinary rite in the days of the Apostles (Acts viii. 38; Romans vi. 3—5; Coloss. ii. 12), and continued in common use as late as the fourteenth century. But immersion is not the sole mode of application; it is enough if the water be poured so as to flow upon the person. This follows from the present practice of the Church, for if the rite now in universal use were invalid, the Church must long ago have perished, which would be against the promises of Christ. (n. 166.) In fact, as early as the third century, we find St. Cyprian speaking of

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"sprinkling or immersion" as alternative modes of baptizing (Epist. 76, *Ad Magnum*, n. 12; *P.L.* 3, 1194), and the sufficiency of sprinkling is implied in the Book of the Doctrine of the Apostles (n. 7), which belongs to the second century at latest. In fact, immersion cannot have been used with safety in the case of infants (n. 691) or the sick; and it is incredible that it was employed when as many as three thousand were baptized at once, in consequence of a sermon of St. Peter. (Acts ii. 41.) It is in accord with the supremest necessity of this Sacrament that its matter is the element which is almost everywhere at hand, and that it may be administered by any human being; and there would be an inconsistency if a rite of administration were required which is impossible except under peculiar circumstances.

We may notice the words of St. John Baptist (St. Matt. iii. 11), where he declares that Christ would baptize the people in the Holy Ghost and fire. Various interpretations have been suggested for these words, and they may be understood as referring to the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles in the form of fire (Acts ii. 3; xi. 16); at any rate, it cannot seriously be contended that they refer to sacramental Baptism and fire as its matter; for such an interpretation has never been adopted in practice. The change of the ordinary rite from immersion to sprinkling was made by authority of the Church (n. 681), which is sufficient. The necessity of immersion is maintained by many teachers among the people called Baptists. (n. 690.)

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689. *Form of Baptism.*—Christ gave the Apostles the commission to teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (St. Matt. xxviii. 19); and this express mention of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity must be added by the minister to the words "I baptize thee," and if they be omitted the Sacrament is invalid. The doctrine that this is the only lawful form will not be questioned by any who call themselves Christians, except by such as doubt or deny the distinction of Persons in the Godhead (n. 400); but some few theologians have doubted whether it is absolutely essential, or at least whether it has always been required. The reason of the doubt is that we read in the Acts of the Apostles that converts were baptized "in the Name of Jesus Christ" (Acts ii. 38; viii. 12; x. 48), or "in the Name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts xix. 5.) It seems best to understand these words as merely describing Christian Baptism, as distinguished from various rites in use among the Jews of the time, and similar to that administered by St. John; but some have thought that they point to some such form as "in the Name of the Father, and of Jesus the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." St. Bonaventure (in lib. iv. Sent. Dist. 3, q. 2) and St. Thomas (3. p. q. 66. a. 6. ad. 1.) agree in thinking that the Apostles must have received a special revelation allowing them for a time to employ the form recorded by St. Luke, the motive being that the Name of Christ, so despised by Jews and Gentiles alike, might be rendered honourable, when miraculous effects were

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seen to follow from Baptism in that Name. Some few among the older theologians have held that the distinction of three Persons of the Blessed Trinity is sufficiently expressed by the Name of Christ, who is the Son of the Father, and conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost. This view makes the form "in the Name of Christ" to be still valid, though unlawful; but, probably, it has no supporters at the present day.

690. *The Minister of Baptism.*—Apart from cases of necessity, when any one may act, Baptism ought not to be administered except by a priest, or a deacon. (Acts viii. 12, 38.) But Baptism by any lay man or woman will be valid, and even by a heathen or infidel, provided that matter and form are used duly, with the intention of performing the initiatory rite of the Christians. This latitude corresponds well with the necessity of the Sacrament (n. 693), and is disputed by none with whom we have to do.

It follows that Baptism may be validly administered by the use of the accustomed rite of the sect in all the sects of Protestants commonly met with in countries where English is spoken, except the Unitarians, who deny the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity (n. 400), and the Quakers, and some kindred sects, who are unwilling to proclaim that they believe it. The Baptists, who use immersion, are specially careful in the application of the matter and form, and there is little room for doubt as to the validity of their Baptisms; it is, therefore, the more unfortunate that they refuse to administer the Sacrament to infants. (n. 691.) But converts to the

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Catholic faith, from whatever sect they come, are always baptized conditionally, except in two cases. First, there may be positive proof forthcoming that in the individual case no valid Baptism has been administered, as when the rite used by the sect was wholly omitted, or is such as is certainly invalid. Secondly, when there is positive proof forthcoming that a valid rite was duly administered. In the first case, the convert is baptized unconditionally; in the second case, the rite is not repeated. This discipline, it will be seen, secures that the convert has an assured Sacrament, and at the same time that the Sacrament is not repeated; the condition expresses the intention of the minister to baptize the applicant "if thou art unbaptized," but not otherwise; it is used whenever the matter is in the smallest doubt. The practice of the Church is the same in regard to the Sacraments of Confirmation and Orders, which like Baptism impress a character, and cannot be repeated without sacrilege (n. 671); the expression of the condition is insisted on, except where it is regarded as certain that the Sacrament has not been already received.

691. *The Subject of Baptism.*—Every man who has not already been baptized is capable of receiving the Sacrament, and, as we shall see (n. 693), there is a general Divine law binding all men to receive it. We shall consider before long the admirable effects of this Sacrament, and shall find that infants are capable of being benefited by it no less than adults. The general practice of the Church in all times of her history has been to encourage the Baptism of

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infants at the earliest possible time; and although, at one period, a usage came in, of deferring the Baptism of adults till death was imminent, this usage was a mere corruption, not founded on true Christian principles. The motive for seeking clinical, or death-bed (κλίνη), Baptism, was found in the doctrine that the Sacrament cleanses from all sin, and the idea that it was well to enter the next life with the least possible amount of post-baptismal sin; but those who practised, or encouraged this mode of dealing with sacred things, forgot that no good could come from neglect to use the means of sanctification which God has instituted for our spiritual benefit. (See n. 694.)

With some obscure exceptions, no Christians raised any objection to the practice of the Church to baptize infants until the time when Luther preached his new doctrine of justification by faith only. His followers, who believed that the Sacraments were mere signs of grace which they presumed but did not convey, saw a difficulty in reconciling their doctrine with the practice of conferring Baptism on those who by reason of their tender age were incapable of believing; this practice, they thought, amounted to the exhibition of the sign in the absence of the thing supposed to be signified. Notwithstanding this difficulty, and in spite of the absence of clear Scripture warrant for the practice, as to which we shall speak directly, the great mass of Protestants inconsistently continued to do what had always been done, alleging various flimsy pretexts for their decision: in truth, they felt the

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force of the argument from tradition and the authority of the Church, and on this, as on other points, abandoned their own principle as to the rule of faith. (n. 107.) Thus, the Catechism, which forms part of the Book of Common Prayer of the Established Church, explains that faith is required of persons to be baptized, and that infants who have no faith are baptized, because their godparents promise that they shall have faith hereafter, a promise which themselves are in due time bound to perform. How this view secures the requisite faith in case the child die before reaching years of discretion, is not explained, nor is it made clear whether Baptism may be valid in the absence of godparents: and many other similar doubts may be raised as to the meaning.

But some Protestants were more consistent in evil, and absolutely denied the validity of Baptism conferred upon infants: all adults who came to them were obliged to submit to receive the Sacrament anew. In Germany, these received the name of Anabaptists, or re-baptizers. (*ἀνά.*) They adopted certain tenets as to private property and other matters which were inconsistent with social order, and strove to defend the rights of their private judgment by force of arms: they were defeated in 1535, and disappeared from view. In England, some followers of the Reformation objected to the Baptism of infants, and obtained the name of Antipedobaptists (*ἀντί, παῖς, βαπτίζω*), which word is too long for ordinary use, and is commonly shortened into Baptists; the full name has the

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advantage of expressing the leading doctrine of them that bear it, for it signifies that they are against the Baptism of children; their opponents are Pedobaptists, or child-baptizers. Most, if not all, Baptists hold that the rite must be performed by immersion. (n. 688.) The party which took its rise towards the end of the sixteenth century is largely represented in all countries where English is spoken: they hold various shades of Calvinistic (n. 390, iv. v.) doctrine. (n. 251.) With the one exception of their doctrine as to infant Baptism, they have nothing in common with the Anabaptists.

It is impossible for the question of infant Baptism to be discussed directly between a Catholic and a Baptist: they have no common ground. The Baptist urges that the Scripture everywhere treats faith as a pre-requisite to Baptism (St. Mark xvi. 16; Acts viii. 37, xvi. 30—33, &c.); the Catholic replies that these passages refer to adults only, and defends his practice as to infants by the authority of the Church, which the Baptist refuses to recognize. The Catholic points out that God will have all men to be saved (1 Timothy ii. 4; n. 389), and that Baptism, the necessary condition of salvation (St. John iii. 5), must therefore be attainable by all men; the Baptist replies that salvation is for the predestined, and for them alone. The controversy is thus at once carried away from the subject with which it began, and rambles into subjects belonging to other Treatises.

692. *The Effects of Baptism.*—We learn from the testimony of Holy Scripture and from the other

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channels of tradition, that the Sacrament of Baptism, duly received, works many excellent effects in the soul; and first, it does away with all sin, both original and actual. (nn. 500, 596.) The Apostles baptized men for the remission of their sins (Acts ii. 38); St. Paul was bidden to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins (Acts xxii. 16); the Corinthians are reminded of the sin in which they had had part, but are reminded also that they were washed, were sanctified, were justified. (1 Cor. vi. 9—11.) These texts are in accord with the declaration of the Council of Trent that, by the grace of our Lord which is conferred in Baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted, and all that has the true and proper character of sin is removed. (Sess. 5, can. 5; Denz. 674.)

Further, the Council, in the same place, defines that in the newly baptized there is nothing to hinder their entry into Heaven; or, in other words, that the Sacrament releases from all temporal punishment due to forgiven sin. (n. 829.) That this doctrine was held by the Church in early days is proved by the distinction which she made, in the administration of her penitential discipline, between pre-baptismal and post-baptismal sin: penance was enjoined for the latter, but not for the former: a candidate for Baptism was exercised in works of penance, but, when once he was baptized, the past was forgotten.

Another effect of the Baptism of water is that a character is impressed upon the soul, as we have seen (n. 671); and lastly, the baptized person

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becomes an adopted son of God, a member of Christ (Galat. iii. 27; 1 Cor. vi. 15), and is joined to the Church. (Acts ii. 41.)

693. *The Necessity of Baptism.*—The Council of Trent (Sess. 6, cap. 4; Denz. 678) declares that since the promulgation of the Gospel, justification (n. 626) cannot be attained without Baptism of water or the desire of it, according to the words, "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." (St. John iii. 5.) The words of this text are perfectly general, and the constant tradition of the Church teaches that they embrace all human beings, of whatever age. Baptism in some form is therefore the necessary means of salvation.

694. *Baptism of Desire.*—But this necessity is not strictly absolute, in the sense in which the habit of grace (n. 643) is necessary to salvation; for, as the Council suggests, when the Baptism of water cannot be had, its want may sometimes be supplied. For what is called the Baptism of the Spirit, or of fire, which involves at least the implicit (n. 631) desire of true Baptism, will supply its place; for Christ has said, "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father." (St. John xiv. 21.) It is this perfect love of God, or sorrow for sin, that constitutes the Baptism of the Spirit: this cannot be without the desire to fulfil all the commands of God, and it includes the implicit desire to fulfil the command requiring men to receive Baptism. It is in virtue of this implicit desire that perfect love or sorrow works the effect of remitting sin. In the

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same way, this act of perfect contrition may avail to justify a baptized person who is under the guilt of actual sin, in virtue of the desire of the Sacrament of Penance which it contains. We shall speak more fully on this subject in our Nineteenth Treatise. (n. 756.)

This doctrine that Baptism of Desire may suffice for salvation when the true Sacrament is unattainable, may be illustrated from the discourse delivered in the year 392 by St. Ambrose at Milan, on occasion of the funeral of the Emperor Valentinian II. This unfortunate victim of the prevailing practice of deferring Baptism (n. 691) was actually on his way from Gaul for the purpose of receiving the sacred rite at the hands of his friend and teacher, St. Ambrose, when he was murdered while passing through Vienne. The body was brought to Milan, and the Saint preached a beautiful discourse, to console the family of the victim. (*P.L.* 16, 1367, seq.) He took occasion to point out that the catechumen had certainly desired that grace of which the Sacrament is the appointed channel, and had prayed for it, nor was it to be doubted that he received what he prayed for. Piety and good-will, he says, gained for this catechumen what the martyrs gain by shedding their blood.

The desire of Baptism in Valentinian was explicit (n. 631); but the Fathers teach also that the implicit desire may suffice. Thus St. Augustine (*De Baptismo*, iv. 25, 32; *P.L.* 43, 176) distinguishes the Sacrament of Baptism and the turning of the heart to God, and says that regularly both are

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required for salvation; but if either of these conditions cannot be secured, the other will suffice: thus, a baptized infant is saved, without conversion of heart; and a man who turns to God is saved without Baptism, provided that he does not despise the Sacrament. Contempt of God's ordinance is of course inconsistent with the turning of the heart. And if further authority is needed, we have it in the condemnation by Pope St. Pius V. of the doctrine of Baius, that charity, which is the fulfilling of the law, is not always conjoined with remission of sin. (Prop. 32; Denz. 912.)

695. *Baptism of Blood.*—It is the constant doctrine of the Fathers that all men who suffer martyrdom for Christ attain remission of all sin and punishment, whether they be infants or adults. By a martyr is here to be understood one who suffers with patience death, or treatment which would naturally cause death, for the Catholic faith or for the practice of any Christian virtue. According to Tertullian, St. John the Evangelist was thrown into the cauldron of boiling oil, by order of the Emperor Domitian, and his life was saved by miracle, so that he eventually died a natural death; but nevertheless he is honoured as a martyr. (Tert. *De Præscript.* 36; *P.L.* 2, 49.) Although the ordinary case of martyrdom is death for the faith, still the privilege belongs to many who have died for the sake of other virtues. St. John of Nepomuk died rather than betray the secret of confession; St. Alphege of Canterbury preferred to die by the hands of the Danes rather than harshly exercise his legal rights

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and compel his dependants to raise the money demanded for his ransom; and his successor, St. Thomas, suffered in defence of the liberties of the Church.

The essential character of martyrdom is that death or suffering should be incurred voluntarily in testimony of the truth, and it is to this that the derivation of the word points (μάρτυς, a witness). The ordinary definition requires that the martyr should suffer with patience, for otherwise he has scanty likeness to Christ, who was led as a sheep to the slaughter (Isaias liii. 7); and Tertullian expressly denies that soldiers who fall in battle can be called martyrs, however good the cause in which they fight. (*Contra Marcion.* 4, 39; *P.L.* 2, 456.) Such men are popularly called martyrs, and if the case arise of their being proposed for canonization, the question will be discussed whether the popular judgment is right. The term may be a mere loose expression, like martyr of charity. But whether these Christian heroes would be honoured under the name of martyrs or under that of confessors, their salvation can hardly depend upon their Baptism of Blood: it can rarely happen that they are without the Baptism of water, and, even if this happen, they will probably have been justified by the Baptism of Desire.

It need scarcely be said that no one who retains affection for sin, or who knowingly despises the law of Baptism, can be benefited, even though he die for Christ; but he who being repentant for his sins suffers martyrdom, receives remission of sin.

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This is the doctrine which the Fathers deduce from the promise read in the Gospel (St. Matt. x. 32, 39): Every one that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in Heaven. These words, as St. Augustine remarks, are no less general than those in which our Lord declares to Nicodemus the general law of the necessity of Baptism (St. John iii. 5); and he deduces the consequence that remission of sin is secured by death for Christ no less than by Baptism of water. (*De Civit. Dei*, 13, 7; *P.L.* 41, 381.) And the same holy Doctor, in another place, protests that it is an insult to pray for a martyr, to whose prayers we ought to recommend ourselves. (Serm. 17, *De Verbis Apost.* [159], i. 1; *P.L.* 38, 868.) He believed, therefore, that martyrdom secured remission of temporal punishment due to sin. The honour paid to the Holy Innocents as martyrs, is ancient in the Church.

696. *Unbaptized Infants.* — The doctrine that Baptism of water may be replaced by Baptism of Desire or by Baptism of Blood is not, as is sometimes supposed, a recent development of doctrine; it is taught for instance, by St. Gregory Nazianzen, in a sermon preached in 381 (Orat. 39, *In Sancta Lumina*, 17; *P.G.* 35, 356), where mention is made of the Baptism of water, of martyrdom, and of tears. It must be observed that we do not hold that there are three kinds of Baptism, for in the Creed read in the Mass, we confess one Baptism for the remission of sins, the actual reception of which, however, may be replaced in either of the two ways mentioned.

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No other mode of replacement can be admitted, for no other is found in the monuments of revelation. What we have said (n. 693) proves what is the ordinary law of God's providence. It is true that St. Bonaventure (in 4, dist. 6. p. 2. a. 2. q. 1.) and other early theologians teach that God may by an extraordinary effect of His mercy supply what is wanting, in case Baptism has been administered in a way which is invalid for want of due matter, form, or intention. But this suggestion has not found favour, and although it has never been expressly condemned, yet perhaps the best that can be said for it will be that it is not actually heretical. It will be observed that we must either suppose this mercy to be extended as often as the case arises, and then it would become the ordinary law, which cannot be admitted: or we must suppose that it is sometimes granted and sometimes withheld, which in the absence of authority it is arbitrary and rash (n. 328, iv.) to allege.

We hold then that, after the promulgation of the Gospel (n. 693), infants who die without Baptism of water or of blood, are not admitted to the supernatural vision of God which constitutes the happiness of Heaven; that in consequence of the sin of Adam, they will remain for ever deprived of that happiness for which they were destined. But this privation is no injustice to them, for their nature gave them no claim in justice to a supernatural reward (n. 481); nor does it imply any unhappiness in them, for they need not be supposed to know what they have lost. What little can be said con-

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cerning the difficult subject of their state, will be found in the closing Treatise of this volume.

697. *Recapitulation.*—The titles of the paragraphs show sufficiently the order in which we have treated the questions that arise concerning the Sacrament of Baptism.

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Treatise the Seventeenth.

Confirmation.

698. *Subject of the Treatise.*—The second in the series of the Sacraments is Confirmation. The questions that arise regarding it are much the same as in the case of Baptism, but they admit of much shorter treatment.

699. *Nature of Confirmation.*—Confirmation is a Sacrament of the New Law by which a baptized person receives an increase of habitual grace, together with the special aid of the Holy Spirit, helping him to believe the truths of faith and to profess it boldly. The name Confirmation signifies strengthening: the Sacrament is also called chrism, the laying on of hands, or the seal. It has existed at least since the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came upon the Apostles. (Acts ii.)

The Council of Trent defines (Sess. 7, *De Confirm.* can. 1; Denz. 752) that Confirmation is a Sacrament, distinct from Baptism, and the main proof is found in what we have said as to the number of the Sacraments. (n. 664.) But more may be said, for we find it in Holy Scripture that the Holy Ghos was given in a peculiar way to the baptized through

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the laying on of the hands of the Apostles (Acts viii. 14—17; xix. 6); and it is plain that great importance was ascribed to this rite, and that it could not be conferred by all persons who were competent to baptize.

In later times, the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation were commonly conferred together, and occasions for the distinct mention of the second are rare. But several scattered notices of Confirmation have been collected from the Fathers, as may be seen in Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics;* in particular, we may mention the special treatise on the subject contained in the course of instructions for the newly baptized drawn up by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, about the year 348. (*Catech. Mystagog.* 3; *P.G.* 33, 1087.) Confirmation finds a place in all the lists of the Seven Sacraments in use in the Churches of the East.

700. *The Requisites of Confirmation.*—According to the present discipline of the Western Church, the ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation is a Bishop, but a simple priest may also act, by special delegation from the Holy See. The matter involves the use of chrism, and also certain manual acts of the minister; the form is certain words used by the minister. The word chrism is derived from the same Greek root (χρίω) as gives us Christ, the Anointed One: it signifies a mixture of fragrant balsam with olive-oil, and requires to be blessed by a Bishop. The practice of the Roman Church assures us that the rite here described is valid and licit, but there is much controversy concerning each

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of the particulars, especially on the question how far they are of Divine institution or merely ordered by the Church. The matter is not of sufficient interest to justify our lingering on it.

As to the subject, every baptized person is susceptible of Confirmation, provided he has not already received that Sacrament. The present usage is that, in the absence of special circumstances, children should not be confirmed at an earlier age than seven.

Since Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a character on the soul (n. 671), the precautions which we have already described (n. 690) must be taken in order to guard against sacrilegious repetitions.

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Treatise the Eighteenth.

The Holy Eucharist.

CHAPTER I.

THE REAL PRESENCE.

701. *Plan of the Treatise.*—We come now to the Treatise on the Holy Eucharist, which we shall show (n. 703) to be on many accounts the most excellent of the Sacraments. It is the Sacrament in which the Body and Blood of Christ are contained under the species of bread and wine, for the spiritual refreshing of our souls. But we have to deal, not with the Sacrament only, but also with the Sacrifice of the Mass in which the consecration is effected. Our subject therefore falls into two main parts, each of which affords matter for more than one chapter. We shall treat, in order, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the nature and consequence of the change called Transubstantiation, and of the reception of the Blessed Sacrament by the faithful in Holy Communion. Coming then to Holy Mass, we shall show that it is a true Sacrifice, and finally describe its effects.

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The whole Treatise, as is obvious, is based upon revelation and not upon reason; God has revealed to His Church how far His gracious condescension has led Him, and it will be our business to explain the truths made known to us, and to defend them against specious attacks founded on pretended grounds of reason.

702. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the present chapter, we shall point out the respects in which the Blessed Eucharist stands as the most excellent of the Sacraments, and then prove from the accustomed sources, that Christ is really present in the consecrated elements.

703. *Excellence of the Eucharist.*—The Fathers seem never to tire of inventing new titles of honour for the great object of the worship of the Church. (n. 725.) They speak of the Eucharist as a holy, most holy, divine, tremendous mystery. They call It the breaking of bread (St. Luke xxiv. 35), the Eucharist of thanksgiving (1 Cor. xi. 23), the Supper of the Lord, the Sacrament of the Altar, the Lord's Table, Holy Communion, our Viaticum, or provision for our journey through life. None of these terms will appear exaggerated to any one who considers what is the faith of the Church on the subject. St. Thomas, in the Sequence *Lauda Sion*, which he composed for the Mass of the feast of Corpus Christi, bids us put no restraint on ourselves in praising that which is above all praise. This Sequence is not merely sublime poetry, but it is a compendium of the theology of the Eucharist. The sense entertained of the excellence of the Eucharistic gift is

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shown by the care to protect It by a hedge of rubrics from even accidental profanation, and by the instinct which leads the Christian people to lavish pains and expense upon the adornment of the Altar (n. 729) and the Tabernacle. (n. 725.) The words of Christ, warning us not to give that which is holy to dogs (St. Matt. vii. 6) were considered to apply in a peculiar manner to the thrice-holy Sacrament; and not only was care taken to guard against actual profanation, but all knowledge of the Mystery was sedulously kept back, not from the heathen alone, but even from candidates for Baptism, and those that spoke of It often used curiously veiled expressions, sufficiently intelligible to all who were in the secret, but void of meaning to all others. Thus, if it were necessary to quote the words of institution, the phrase would be, "Christ took bread and said, so and so." All this sufficiently shows the high place the Blessed Eucharist held in all the thoughts of Christians of the time.

704. *The Catholic Doctrine.*—The doctrine of the Church on the subject with which this Treatise is concerned may conveniently be quoted from the Creed drawn up by Pope Pius IV., at the close of the Council of Trent. The clause runs as follows: "Likewise I profess that in Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead: and that in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially the Body and Blood together with the Soul and the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there takes place a conversion of the whole

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substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood: which conversion the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation." (Denz. 865.)

705. *Protestant Views.*—The sectaries that arose early in the sixteenth century agreed in nothing so much as in attacking the Catholic doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist, but they were far from agreeing as to what was to be substituted for it. Some felt that the testimony of Scripture and Tradition to the Real Presence was too strong to be resisted, though they refused to admit the Word Transubstantiation (n. 713), which the Church had chosen as enshrining the only intelligible form of this doctrine. (n. 211.) Some of these, as Luther, taught that the substance of the Body of Christ was present in the consecrated Host, along with the substance of bread, and the change was called Consubstantiation. Though this view is hard to defend philosophically, it is at least definite, and it has maintained its ground with many of the German Protestants. Attempts to teach a real presence without some definition of the mode of this presence failed, for they were too vague to take hold of the minds of the people, and led to an impression that Christ was present only to him who received the elements with faith: in other words that there was no presence except at the instant of Communion, and then only to the worthy communicant. It is probably this view that has been most usual in England, but it inevitably led men to lapse into regarding the Eucharist as a merely commemorative

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meal, partaken of by Christians in memory of the Last Supper of Christ (St. John xiii. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 20), and of His Death which followed so soon. This view, which denied all presence in the elements, is commonly ascribed to *Z*winglius, one of the Swiss Reformers. It is probably held at the present day by the great bulk of Protestants.

The formularies of the English Established Church are ingeniously so contrived as to lend countenance to every one of the views that we have mentioned; and within the last sixty years a systematic effort has been made to show that they do not exclude even the doctrine taught at Trent. (n. 704.) The authoritative Catechism teaches that the inward part or thing signified in the Sacrament of the Supper of the Lord is the Body and Blood of Christ which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful; this declaration leaves it undecided whether there is any presence apart from the faithful reception. The formula which is ordered to be used when the elements are given clearly embraces all phases of the doctrine: "The *Body* of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy soul unto everlasting life. Take, and eat this in *remembrance* that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by *faith* with thanksgiving." Each of the leading schools would emphasize one of the words which we here put in italics, and would ignore the teaching of the other two.

706. *Prescription.*—Postponing for a moment the proof of the doctrine of the Real Presence derived from Scripture and Tradition, we will point out that

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prescription is in its favour; the force of which argument has been already explained. (nn. 83, 665.) It is undeniable that the doctrine taught at Trent had been held throughout the Church for many centuries; it had been rarely called in question, and when a doubt was raised, the controversy served to show how widespread and deeply rooted was the belief of the Christian people. The Docetæ (n. 507, i.), who denied the reality of the Body in which Christ suffered on the Cross, consistently denied that His Body was present in the Blessed Eucharist; and are upbraided for their error by St. Ignatius, the disciple of the Apostles. (Epist. Genuin. *Ad Smyrn.* c. 7; *P.G.* 5, 713.) But perhaps the doctrine of the Real Presence was questioned by none who held the truth as to the Incarnation, until the eleventh century, when doubts were raised by Berengarius.

These doubts were of a scholastic nature, touching the mode of the presence and not the fact, and they were soon forgotten, and were little heard of until the rise of the Protestant Reformation. Berengarius himself acknowledged that he had fallen into error, and he did not found any lasting school.

The Catholic doctrine was therefore in possession at the opening of the sixteenth century, and there is no trace of the protests which would certainly have been made against the introduction of a startling novelty. This doctrine must, therefore, have been held from the beginning, and cannot be displaced except by an authority bearing the same credentials as were exhibited by the Apostles.

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This argument would be conclusive in favour of the doctrine, even if it stood alone.

707. *The Promise.*—If the discourse recorded in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John be read (vv. 26—72), it will be seen that Christ promised His hearers that He would give them His Flesh to eat, and that they who eat should have everlasting life. Some of His disciples refused to believe this declaration, and left Him: St. Peter and others were faithful and believed the words of the Son of God. This passage clearly admits of being understood as conveying a promise that the Blessed Eucharist, such as Catholics understand It to be, should in due time be given to the Church. We maintain that no other interpretation is possible.

An immense amount of labour has been spent by interpreters, who weigh every word in this much disputed passage, and adduce parallels and illustrations without number. The main question, of course, is the meaning to be attached to the phrase "eat the flesh" of the Speaker, and attempts are made to show that it is equivalent to believing His doctrine. There is a difference of opinion among Catholic commentators whether the whole of the discourse relate directly to the Eucharist, or whether the eating of the Bread of Life spoken of in the earlier part may not be faith: we need not enter on this question, but we hold that at least from the fifty-second verse onwards the Eucharist is spoken of, and the doctrine of the Real Presence is taught. This doctrine agrees with the literal sense of the words, which is not to be abandoned without reason:

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and no instance can be found in which a purely figurative expression is used again and again, with various turns of phrase, and without a hint that it is not to be understood in its proper meaning; the Psalmist speaks (xxvi. 2) of his flesh being eaten, but this expression signifies his total destruction by his enemies, as is clear from the varied figures used in the following verses.

In English, we sometimes speak of a pupil drinking in wisdom from the lips of his teacher; but though the phrase will not be mistaken when used once, yet if the experiment be made it will be found that nothing but confusion can result from an attempt to use it again and again throughout a long discourse. Especially, no wise teacher would persist in using this phrase if he found that in fact he was misunderstood; he would explain himself; but Christ allowed some of His disciples to fall away from Him rather than utter a word to show that He did not mean what His words seemed to imply and were taken to imply. When the disciples murmured, doubting the possibility of what was promised, the Teacher did not soften His words, but was content to insist on the credentials of His Mission.

The one positive objection that can be raised against our interpretation is found in the sixty-fourth verse: "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." The words have been said to show that there can be no profit in eating the Flesh of Christ. But it is to be observed that in the part of the discourse with which we are chiefly concerned (vv. 52—59), the Flesh is not opposed to

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the Spirit, but is spoken of alone: and in every place of Scripture where this opposition is met with, the "flesh" signifies the lower inclinations of man, and chiefly those that are bodily. (*e.g.*, Galat. v. 16—26; and see n. 485.) There is abundant evidence that the Fathers in general understood the passage before us as we do. They sometimes point out that the people of Capharnaum (St. John vi. 17, 24) who heard Christ speak may have assumed, mistakenly, that the Flesh would be given them to eat in its natural state: this would be what is called a Capharnaitic repast.

708. *The Institution.*—The institution of the Blessed Eucharist is recorded in four places of Holy Scripture. (St. Matt. xxvi. 26—29; St. Mark xiv. 22—25; St. Luke xxii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xi. 23—26.) It will be observed that St. John, writing to supplement the Synoptics, does not repeat the narrative that they have given. The four accounts are in perfect agreement as to the main point, although the interpreters have some difficulty in reconciling them as to a few of the accessory circumstances.

The essential words are, "This is My Body." It is not questioned that if by these words the bread which Christ held in His hand was changed into His Body, then the same change has place in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Also, the literal sense of the words is that which the Catholic doctrine requires, and the sole question is whether there is any reason compelling us to abandon this literal sense, and find some other. No such reason is forthcoming; for it is irrelevant to say that the

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change alleged cannot be effected by human power: the things that are impossible with men are possible with God (St. Luke xviii. 27), and it will never be proved that the Catholic explanation involves a contradiction. (nn. 387, 716.) Every attempt to set up a figurative sense seems to be excluded by the declaration that what was contained in the consecrated Chalice was that which was poured out for the remission of sin: now, the atonement was wrought by the effusion of the natural Blood of Christ upon the Cross (n. 542); it follows that this Blood was contained in the Chalice.

709. *Objections.*—The greatest ingenuity has been displayed in devising grounds for questioning whether the plain words used by our Lord when instituting the Blessed Eucharist mean what they appear to mean. We will notice the chief of these objections.

We do not deny that in the Holy Scripture the word "is" sometimes stands for "is a figure or sign of," and so may be described as equivalent to "represent." Thus, our Lord says, "I am the door" (St. John x. 9), "I am the true vine" (St. John xvi.; see, also, Genesis xli. 26; Exodus xii. 11; 1 Cor. x. 4, &c.). But the word "is" much more frequently has the sense of "is," and for fifteen centuries no one suspected that in the words of institution it meant "represent:" nor did any preacher insist on the truth that Christ was a vine, nor did any one ever abandon the faith rather than believe that Christ was a door. (St. John vi. 67.)

No one doubts that, in the passage from St. Luke (xxii. 20), the chalice signifies the contents, and the

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Testament or covenant signifies the outward thing which attests the covenant. Whatever difficulty may remain disappears when the words of the other Evangelists are considered.

It seems that Christ speaks of the consecrated chalice as the fruit of the vine, or wine. (St. Matt. xxvi. 29.) Some think that this verse refers not to the cup that was consecrated, but to one which was sent round at the close of the solemn supper: this opinion finds solid support from investigations as to the number of ceremonial cups in use at the Pasch, but its discussion would carry us too far away from our subject. It is enough to say that persons who undoubtedly hold the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist, see no difficulty in speaking of the consecrated cup as containing wine, because its contents had their origin in wine, and because they have the accidents, or sensible qualities, of wine. When sight had miraculously been conferred upon a man St. John still speaks of him as blind. (ix. 17.)

The Apostles are bidden to do that which Christ did in remembrance of Him: and this injunction is said to exclude His abiding presence on earth. But we may well need helps to remember even a thing that is present, for God is everywhere present, and yet we must strive to remember Him (Eccles. xii. 1); and certainly the visible presence of Christ under the Eucharistic veils helps us to remember what He has done for us. (1 Cor. xi. 26.)

These specimens of the results of a perverted ingenuity may suffice. Such difficulties would never have occurred to any but those who were bent on

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finding excuses for withholding their belief. If our interpretation of the words of institution be compared with the words of promise already discussed (n. 707), they will be found to afford each other trong support.

710. *Tradition.*—An immense number of passages have been collected attesting that the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist was held by the Fathers, for which the reader is referred to Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics*, and *La Perpetuité de la Foi.* We can do no more than present some specimens of the way in which they regard the subject. They contrast the manna, the paschal lamb, and other objects mentioned in the Old Testament with the great Sacrament of the New Law, affirming that those were merely figures, while this is the reality. They declare the truth in express words, as is done by St. Ignatius. (n. 706.) They explain the mode in which the Flesh of Christ is eaten as being such that the feast is no cannibal banquet, and they call those stupid who find difficulty in the doctrine. They fully recognize how great is the miracle which is worked when the consecration takes place, and appeal to the power and love of God in explanation: and it is peculiarly persuasive to notice how often the doctrine is obviously assumed in places where it is not expressly treated; also, that the doctrine is often treated as common ground affording a sure basis for controversy on other points of Christian teaching. Sometimes it would even seem that the Fathers foresaw the difficulties that would one day be raised, and answered them by anticipation.

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At the same time, it cannot be denied that stray phrases can be found in the Patristic writings which may raise difficulty. Considering the extremely mysterious nature of the doctrine, it would be strange if this were not so. But if all these obscure passages be collected together, it will be found that they have no unity, and that they are far surpassed in number and weight by the vast amount of testimony that supports our doctrine; and if any one writer of weight had really differed, in mind and not in expression only, from the mass of his contemporaries, the circumstance would certainly have been noticed. In days when no controversy had arisen, a freedom of expression was indulged in, which would have been avoided when the rise of heresies had taught the need of caution. (n. 498, &c.)

In the case of the Eucharist there are two peculiar sources of ambiguity, which will not be avoided without care. We may speak of the consecrated Host according to that which we believe It to be, or according to that which presents itself to the senses: sight and the rest do not disclose to us the truth, the knowledge of which we owe to hearing alone. And again, there is a sense in which one who receives the consecrated Host may be said not to eat the Flesh of Christ; for to eat this Flesh is a spiritual blessing, but if he that eats is consciously adhering to sin he receives no blessing, and therefore may be said not to eat the Flesh. Lastly, the Presence of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist is sometimes denied, when the intention is only to deny that He is present with a Body subject to infirmities

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such as beset His mortal Body on earth. The Eucharistic Body is now the same as the Body which was resumed at the Resurrection and is in Heaven: a spiritual Body, as St. Paul calls it. (1 Cor. xv. 44.)

711. *Recapitulation.*—The chief matter of this chapter has been the contrast between the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist as declared at Trent, and the various rival views which had their origin in the sixteenth century. It has then been shown that the Tridentine doctrine has the support of prescription, and that it is the teaching of Scripture and of Tradition. The answers to the chief difficulties drawn from these sources are briefly indicated.

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CHAPTER II.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

712. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the present chapter we shall vindicate the use of the word Transubstantiation, against which certain objections have been raised even by writers who profess to believe the doctrine of the Real Presence; and we shall show that certain doctrines follow by way of corollary from what we have proved; especially that Christ is present whole and entire both under the species of bread and under the species of wine, and that this Presence is not transient, but lasts as long as the species themselves remain uncorrupted.

713. *Transubstantiation.*—We have quoted (n. 704) from the Creed of Pope Pius the affirmative part of the teaching of Trent concerning the Blessed Eucharist, to which we may now add a reference to the place in which the Council (Sess. 13, can. 2; Denz. 764) declares negatively that the substance of bread does not remain along with the Body of Christ in the consecrated Host. This Canon not only establishes the Real Presence, but also condemns the consubstantiation taught by Luther, and the impanation of his contemporary, Osiander, who devised a theory that as in the Incarnation the Word of God took the nature of man, so by the

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words of consecration Christ takes the nature of bread. This theory finds no support at the present day and need not be further noticed.

The Council therefore teaches three distinct truths concerning the Eucharist: (1) that Christ is present; (2) that the species only and not the substance of bread and wine are there; (3) that the change takes place by way of a particular sort of conversion, to which the Church has given the name Transubstantiation.

This last point failed to meet with the approval of Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who was the moving spirit of the Synod of Bishops held at Pistoia in 1789. (n. 189.) The matter receives notice in the Bull *Auctorem Fidei*, by which Pope Pius VI., in 1794, declared the doctrine of the Church. (Art. 29; Denz. 1392.) The Synod is blamed because in laying down the doctrine of the faith on the rite of consecration, it professes to avoid scholastic questions concerning the mode in which Christ is present in the Eucharist, and it advises the parish priests to avoid them in their teaching; and it mentions only (1) that after the consecration Christ is truly, really, and substantially under the species and (2) that then the whole substance of bread and wine ceases to be, while the species alone remain; thus omitting all mention of Transubstantiation or conversion of the whole substance of bread into the Body and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood. The Council of Trent had defined Transubstantiation as an article of faith and it is contained in the appointed profession of faith (n. 704):

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and so by this ill-judged and suspicious omission, an article belonging to the faith and a word consecrated by the Church for the purpose of upholding the profession of that faith against heresy are withdrawn from notice, and thereby an article of the faith is in danger of falling into oblivion, as though it dealt with a merely scholastic question. The decree of the Synod is therefore condemned as *pernicious, scandalous, derogatory to the exposition of Catholic truth concerning the dogma of Transubstantiation, favourable to heretics.*

The objection raised to the doctrine of Transubstantiation by the upholders of the Real Presence is that the word is new and needless. It is true that the word does not occur in Scripture, and in fact it seems not to be found earlier than the end of the eleventh century, when it was employed by writers who took part in the controversy raised by Berengarius, as most apt to express the Catholic faith (Hildebert of Sens, Serm. 93, *De diversis*, n. 6; *P.L.* 171, 776; Peter of Blois, Epist. 104 (140), to Peter; *P.L.* 207, 420.) These were private theologians, but their language was adopted by the Church, in the Fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215 (Denz. 357), and was in established authoritative use long before the rise of the Reformation.

We have here another specimen of what we have met with before. (n. 113.) The doctrine of the Real Presence had been in quiet possession for a thousand years. Berengarius raised philosophical difficulties against it, which led to discussion; discussion made clear what was the traditional teaching and also

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directed attention to the need of precise expression as a safeguard against mistaken views. The truth being explained was found not to be liable to objection, as the author of the doubt himself acknowledged: and an apt word was found which embodied and preserved this truth.

714. *Terms explained.*—Before we go further, we must give short explanations of certain terms which occur in the present discussion. For fuller illustration of these terms we refer to Father John Rickaby's *General Metaphysics*.

I. *Substance and Accident.*—If we have before us a piece of wax we know that it is a thing having a certain solidity, a certain figure, and a certain colour. But all these can change and yet the wax continue to exist. It softens if heat be applied, and even liquifies; it can be moulded to such shape as we please; and by bleaching its colour is discharged. Nevertheless, we know that the wax remains identically the same under all these changes, and we can think of it without at the same time thinking of any particular figure in connection with it; and so of the colour and the rest. But we cannot think of the figure or colour without at the same time thinking that there is something, be it wax or not, which has this figure and colour.

The mass of wax itself is said to be a substance, its figure and colour are specimens of accidents. A substance is that which does not require to exist *in* anything else, although we must remember that if created it is not self-existent but needs Divine conservation. (n. 438.) An accident is that which

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requires to exist *in* some other thing as its subject.

II. *Matter and Form.*—Wax continues to be wax however much it may be moulded or melted. But it had its origin in the juices of flowers which formed the food of the bee: and if it be heated sufficiently it passes away in smoke. The juices and the smoke are not wax, and yet there is plainly something common to the three things: the wax is not created in the body of the bee, but is produced from the juices (n. 428); so, too, the smoke is not a new creation, but is produced from the wax. We have here, therefore, a series of three different substances, among which there is something common; this something is called the "matter," and that which makes the "matter" to be nectar, wax, or smoke is the "substantial form."

The collection of accidents found in any particular substance constitutes its "accidental form." The substantial form determines what sort of substance the thing is: the "accidental form" distinguishes it from other substances of the same sort. (See n. 680.)

III. *Species.*—In the Treatise on the Eucharist the word "Species" is used to denote the collection of sensible qualities found in the consecrated elements.

IV. *Conversion.*—The sort of change called conversion implies that there is something to start with, which disappears, and something resulting which remains. If we have a change of nothing into something, there is a creation; if of something into

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nothing, we have annihilation; but in neither case do we speak of conversion. Further, there is no conversion unless the disappearance of the one thing in some way lead up to the appearance of the other.

In the ordinary course of nature, when matter loses one substantial form and takes another, the accidental form is also altered, and the change is called a transformation. Nectar is transformed into wax, and wax into smoke. Naturally, every sort of substance has its own set of accidents that go along with it, subject to change within certain limits which are often difficult to assign, but of whose existence there is no doubt. But there is no impossibility in a substance existing without the accidents that naturally belong to it, nor in its existing with the accidents that naturally go with substance of another sort. The Blessed Eucharist is the unique instance of this sort of existence of a substance devoid of its own accidents, but with another set: and the conversion by which one substance is converted into another while the accidents remain unchanged is called "Transubstantiation." We may compare the word with "Transfiguration" (n. 548), by which the "look" (εἶδος, St. Luke ix. 29) of the face of Christ became different, without any change of the substance, or such change of the accidents as would suggest a change of substance.

In what we have been saying, we merely explain the meaning in which certain words are used. We have incidentally assumed much of the doctrine which is discussed and illustrated in that branch of

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Philosophy which treats of the material world, and in which many questions admit of great difference of opinion among Catholic writers. (See Father Haan, *Philosophia Naturalis*.) The doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist is one of the points of contact between Theology and Physics: and the student of either science must be alive to the opportunities of instruction which he may find in the other. Truth cannot contradict truth, but one assured truth may often modify our convictions, and still more frequently our mode of expression concerning another. (n. 440.)

715. *The Doctrine proved.*—With these explanations, the doctrine of Transubstantiation follows easily as a corollary from the doctrine of the Real Presence which has been already proved. (nn. 706—708.) The proof depends upon the words of institution used by Christ, according to which that which He held in His hand was His Body: when He took it up it was bread, but at the instant of speaking it was the Sacred Body, becoming such by virtue of the words spoken. The literal truth of these words is inconsistent with the presence of bread in that of which they were spoken: it remains therefore that the substance of the bread was converted into the substance of the Body of Christ; and since the accidents plainly remain unchanged, the conversion is of the particular sort known as Transubstantiation. (n. 714.)

It may be thought that we have said very little by way of proof of a doctrine which is thought to present much difficulty; but the difficulty is not

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really found in the doctrine of Transubstantiation, but in the Real Presence, of which we have already spoken at length in the last chapter.

716. *Difficulties.*—In a previous place (n. 709) we noticed some objections drawn from Scripture and the Fathers against the doctrine of the Real Presence, and we postponed to the present place the consideration of such other difficulties against the same doctrine in the form held by the Catholic Church, as are derived from other topics. The perusal of these difficulties, with the replies, will throw more light on the whole subject.

First, it is said that our doctrine involves the simultaneous presence of the same Body in various places. This is admitted, but it does not follow that the doctrine is to be rejected as intrinsically absurd. The relation of matter to space is one of the obscurest questions of all Philosophy, and to say the least, it has never been proved that multilocation, or presence in many places, involves a contradiction. We believe that this never will be proved, and our reason is that God has declared that the Body of Christ is present in the Eucharist in each of countless tabernacles. (See Haan, *Philosophia Naturalis.*) We have given our reason for believing the truth, and are not much concerned to inquire how the prodigy is effected. (n. 370, &c.)

There is a kindred difficulty as to how the Body of a Man can exist within the compass of a small fragment of a Host: but this difficulty, like the former, is based on a vain conviction that we are acquainted with the laws of space, and that what

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commonly happens in the course of nature must necessarily be always true, even when God is pleased to act miraculously. There is no ground for this conviction, as they who are most conversant with the subject are most thoroughly assured. It is common to meet with a multiplying mirror, where a man may see the perfect image of himself twenty times over in the space of a few inches. When a blind man is assured by his companion that he was thus multiplied and diminished, he would be rash and wrong if he disbelieved the word spoken to him: but the man born blind is not more ignorant of light than are the acutest reasoners on earth ignorant of the true nature of space.

It is said that the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist upsets the belief in the trustworthiness of the senses, and thus lays the foundation for the most thorough-going scepticism. We reply that according to our doctrine the senses enjoy absolute immunity from error regarding their proper object, namely, what we call the sensible qualities of the objects or the species; but that a rash interpretation of the information brought by the senses may lead the unwary to an erroneous judgment. The senses tell that the consecrated Host is white and round, and has other sensible qualities which ordinarily and naturally go along with the substance of bread, and the prudent judgment will be that, miracles apart, the round white thing is bread: just as one who sees a corpse may prudently judge that, miracles apart, the dead man will not rise to his feet. One who firmly believes that Christ raised

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Lazarus from the dead (St. John xi. 43) is not influenced by this belief when a death occurs in his family: and so the millions who believe that in the consecrated Host there is the Body of Christ and not bread, nevertheless assume that the accidents go along with their proper substance, wherever they have no reason to suppose otherwise. What the eyes see is the colour, they do not see the thing which is coloured.

It is remarked that the Sacred Host, if eaten, nourishes the body, that the Precious Blood, if drunk, produces the effect of wine: that both are subject to be consumed by animals or by fire, and to perish through decay, precisely as if they were bread and wine. This is perfectly true, and is in full accord with Catholic doctrine. The changes spoken of affect the sacred species, and the Divine Presence ceases when these species are corrupted: that is to say, when the change wrought by fire, or the other agencies mentioned, has gone so far that what is acted on would cease to be bread, supposing it to have been bread in the beginning. It may be hard to say at what instant this result is attained, but it is certain that sooner or later the fire would do its work, and we should have cinders and not bread. When the substance of the Body of Christ ceases to be in the corrupting Host, it is replaced by that of burning bread, and all goes on thenceforward as if there had been no consecration.

It is perfectly true that Christ exposes Himself to countless sacrilegious insults by giving to priests, good or bad, the power of consecrating Hosts which

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may pass into irreverent or malicious hands. Yet in this we see nothing but an illustration of the exceedingly great love of God for man. He desires to remain always with us, in spite of all that sinners may do to insult Him, and the Blessed Eucharist is nothing but the sequel of the Incarnation. By becoming Man, God humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the Cross. (Philipp. ii. 8.)

These difficulties from reason, or rather from unreasoning prejudice, may be shaped in various ways, but it is hoped that the reader who has perused what we have said will be able to deal with all that he meets with.

717. *The Two Species.*—"It has always been believed in the Church of God that immediately after the consecration, the true Body of our Lord and His true Blood exist under the species of bread and wine, together with His Soul and Divinity: the Body under the species of bread and the Blood under the species of wine, by force of the words; but the Body under the species of wine and the Blood under the species of bread, and the Soul under both by force of the natural connection and concomitance by which the parts of the Lord Christ, who rose from the dead to die no more, are linked together: and the Divinity by reason of Its admirable Hypostatic Union with the Body and Soul. Wherefore it is most true that there is as much contained under either species as under both, for Christ exists whole and entire under the species of bread, and under every part of the species, whole too and entire under the species of wine and under

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its parts." (Conc. Trid. Sess. 13, cap. 3; Denz. 657.)

This teaching of the Council of Trent as to the existence of Christ under the two species is so clear as scarcely to need comment; nor will any who understand distinctly what is meant by the Hypostatic Union of the Divinity and Humanity in Christ (n. 528), and by the substantial union of soul and body in man (n. 566), think that the doctrine requires proof. It is clear that nothing is present by force of the words except that which the words express, and in the case of the bread, the words express nothing but the Body of Christ: but Christ, the whole Christ, is present, so that the Precious Blood is there, and the Soul and the Divinity, for all these are inseparably united in Christ: they can therefore be present only by way of concomitance, as the Council explains.

If the Sacred Host be broken, what is the result? The Divine Presence is not lost, as is proved by the practice of the Church, adopted in imitation of the act of her Founder (St. Matt. xiv. 23), who allowed all the Apostles to drink of the chalice, thus dividing the species. Christ is therefore whole in each broken portion of the Host as truly as He was in the whole; and the Council declares this to be of faith. (Sess. 13, can. 3; Denz. 765.) Whether the same is true before separation is not so certain, but the great majority of theologians decide the question in the affirmative, for it is incredible that if Christ is not wholly present in a certain part, He becomes present there merely because this part is broken

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from the rest. The parts here spoken of must be understood as being such that the species of bread is found in them; in other words, in such magnitude that, apart from the consecration, they would be bread. As we have said, the Divine Presence ceases when the species perish, whatever be the cause of their perishing.

A strange opinion is found among the propositions ascribed to Rosmini (n. 343), and condemned by the Inquisition. The thirty-first runs as follows: "In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, by force of the words, the Body and Blood of Christ exists in that measure only which corresponds to the quantity of the substance of bread and wine which undergoes transubstantiation: and the rest of the Body is there by concomitance." It would seem that the author of this proposition must have been indulging in some speculations on space, quantity, and the like abstruse subjects, and failed to check them by comparison with the assured doctrine of the Church.

This may be the place to mention that in accordance with the ancient usage, a very small quantity of water is mixed with the wine in the sacred chalice. This is done in imitation of the act of Christ, who is believed to have used wine mingled with water at the Last Supper, in accordance with the universal Jewish custom: but various mystical meanings are found in the rite, particularly that it signifies the union of the Divinity and Humanity in Christ, and is therefore a protest against Nestorian and Eutychian error. (n. 507, iv. v.) The quantity

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of water is so small that it is absorbed by the wine, and ceases to exist as water: the consecration therefore affects the whole of the liquid contained in the chalice, and it would be an error to think that the water remains in existence mixed with the Precious Blood.

The disciplinary law by which at present the chalice is received by none but priests who are actually celebrating Mass will be considered hereafter. (n. 724.)

718. *The Presence Permanent.*—The idea has been current among the Lutherans, who teach a form of the Real Presence, that this Presence is not permanent, but is confined to the time when the Eucharist is used as a Sacrament. This view is condemned by Trent (Sess. 13, can. 4; Denz. 766), and it is the certain doctrine of the Church that the Body of our Lord remains in particles that are reserved for Communion or for the adoration of the faithful. (n. 725.) The words of institution certainly declare that the Host is the Body of Christ, independently of the use that is made of It; the Sacred Presence remains at least for the space of time that separates the Consecration in the Mass from the Communion of the priest, and no reason can be assigned for confining it to this interval. The annals of the early Church afford plenty of instances of the Sacred Species being preserved for long periods of time.

719. *Recapitulation.*—The chief matter of this chapter has been the explanation of the terms which enter into the definition of the change called

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Transubstantiation. When these are understood, the doctrine offers little difficulty to one who believes in the Real Presence. The opportunity was taken of solving certain objections to the doctrine that profess to be drawn from Philosophy; and some points of doctrine were explained touching the two species and the practice of the Church to reserve and adore the consecrated Host.

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CHAPTER III.

THE USE OF THE EUCHARIST.

720. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the present chapter we shall speak of the use of the Blessed Eucharist as a Sacrament, showing what are Its effects and what are the conditions of Its fruitful reception. The matter depends in part upon Divine institution, but partly upon the variable discipline which the Church has established.

721. *Effects of the Eucharist.* — The Blessed Eucharist, like all the other Sacraments, confers grace; but the practice of the Church sufficiently proves that this Heavenly Repast was not instituted primarily for the remission of deadly sin; as St. Justin the Martyr, writing in the second century, says: "None may partake of It but they who believe our teaching to be true, and who have received remission of sin and regeneration in Baptism, and who live according to the laws which Christ has given." (*Apolog.* I. n. 66; *P.G.* 6, 428.) The view of the Fathers on the matter is expressed when they comment on the parable spoken by Christ concerning the man who intruded himself into the banquet-room without having taken care to procure the proper garment; as to which we may

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note that it seems doubtful whether there is any sufficient foundation for the common impression that the host provided such a garment for all his guests. (See Father Knabenbauer, *ad loc.*; and Tristram's *Eastern Customs*.) They regarded this man as the figure of one who approaches Holy Communion without the robe of charity (n. 626); and they observe that the Eucharist is offered to us by way of food (St. John vi. 57, &c.), which profits a living man but is useless to a corpse. The doctrine is clearly implied in the instructions given by St. Paul to his Corinthian converts. (1 Cor. xi. 27.) These and other proofs of the tradition received by the Church justified the Council of Trent in declaring that the remission of sin was not the principal effect of the Eucharist, and that it had other effects. (Sess. 13, can. 5; Denz. 767.)

We have seen (n. 668) that, according to the commonest opinion, the Blessed Eucharist may in certain circumstances confer the first grace, the Sacrament of the Living accidentally doing that which is the proper work of the Sacraments of the Dead; but its proper work is to confer an increase of habitual grace, and to augment the infused virtues (n. 645) and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. (n. 646.) More particularly, this Sacrament increases our union with Christ and with all the members of the Mystical Body of Christ, our fellow-Christians (n. 178); and this effect is indicated by the mode of food under which the Sacrament is received, for our food comes to be most thoroughly united with ourselves. (St. John vi. 57.) The Eucharist is also

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represented as a banquet, which promotes good-fellowship among the guests. This effect of the Sacrament is specially pointed to by the name of Holy Communion which applies to it; its reception is always regarded as a peculiar mark of spiritual union among all partakers.

As food restores vigour to the languishing, although it does not restore life to the dead, so the Blessed Eucharist works the forgiveness of those venial sins which correspond spiritually to the daily waste of the body. St. Thomas points out that in the Eucharist the guilt of venial sin is remitted, — partly through the direct effect of the Sacrament, and partly because it excites to actual fervour of charity. Of course sorrow for the sin is presumed: where there is no sorrow there is no pardon. (p. 3. q. 79. a. 4.) As a concomitant of this effect, the Eucharist also profits us by the remission of temporal punishment due to forgiven sin. (*Ibid.* a. 5.) Further, the Eucharist preserves the spiritual life of the soul by strengthening it against temptation, curbing concupiscence (n. 485), and securing actual grace (n. 586), helping us to avoid sin and practise virtue. This effect is clearly indicated in the discourse of Christ recorded in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and we need not wonder that St. Ignatius the Martyr speaks of the Eucharist as the drug that secures immortality, the antidote against death. (Epist. *Ad Ephesios*, n. 20; *P.G.* 5, 661.) And the same discourse describes the Heavenly Bread as a pledge of a glorious resurrection and of future glory. (St. John vi. 55.)

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722. *The Eucharist, how necessary.*—Christ told the people of Capharnaum, and in their persons the whole Church: "Amen, amen, I say to you: Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you." (St. John vi. 54.) These emphatic words have laid the foundation for the opinion which has sometimes been entertained, and which is ascribed to St. Augustine and to Pope St. Innocent I., that the reception of the Eucharist is a necessary means of salvation, no less than Baptism; and they led to the practice which still prevails in the East of giving Holy Communion to infants immediately after the Baptism; a small portion of a consecrated Host is dipped in the Precious Blood and placed in the child's mouth, or the species of wine alone was administered by the finger of the priest. But the practice prescribed in the Roman Ritual is that Holy Communion should not be given to children who have not reached years of discretion, when they become capable, as St. Paul expresses it, of "discerning" the Body of the Lord (1 Cor. xi. 29), and distinguishing It from ordinary food. The Church would not refuse to children the participation of what is necessary to their salvation, and it follows that the words of Christ which we have quoted do not teach the necessity of the Eucharist, at least to children; and this is the teaching of the Council of Trent. (Sess. 21, cap. 4; Denz. 811.) It is to be remarked that the form of the Divine declaration about Baptism (St. John iii. 5) is more sweeping than what is said concerning the Eucharist;

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the one includes all human beings, the other applies in form only to those actually addressed, although, as we said, it doubtless extends to all who like them were capable of understanding what was said; also, Baptism gives the new birth, the Eucharist feeds: without birth it is understood that there is no life, whereas life may be sustained for a time without food. As to the doctrine of the Fathers, they are found on examination to mean no more than that spiritual union with Christ is essential to salvation, which union is secured and strengthened by Holy Communion, but not by It alone. (n. 721.) The thirty-first of the propositions ascribed to Rosmini and condemned by the Inquisition (n. 343), implies the absolute necessity of the Eucharist; but suggests that when a person dies who is in the grace of God but has never communicated, the necessary supply is miraculously brought to him at the hour of death; and that when our Lord descended into Hell (n. 551) He gave His Sacred Body to the souls detained in Limbo, to fit them for Heaven. This is a fanciful expedient to escape from a fancied difficulty.

There can, however, be no doubt that the discourse at Capharnaum and the words of institution convey a Divine precept requiring all men to make use of this potent means of grace. Moralists discuss the question what frequency of Communion satisfies this precept, and they hold that it is certainly binding when death is imminent, in which case the law requiring the Body of Christ to be received fasting is relaxed. It is to be observed that it is now held by all authorities that Viaticum

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is to be given to criminals condemned to death, no less than to those who are mortally sick. Cases may occur where Holy Communion is the morally necessary means of gaining grace to resist temptation to grievous sin; but apart from these cases of special urgency, it seems that the Divine precept cannot be proved to require greater frequency than the annual reception which the Church has commanded. One who faithfully fulfils his Easter duties does all he is bound to do in this matter.

723. *Frequent Communion.* — Apart from cases where priests celebrate two or more Masses, and some others of rare occurrence, it is not allowed to receive Holy Communion more than once in a day. Beyond this, the Church has no general law upon the subject, and it is left to the judgment of confessors to determine in the case of each of the faithful what frequency of Communion is expedient. Two propositions that bear on it have been condemned: one, which Viva does not find in any author of repute, was condemned by Pope Innocent XI. (n. 56; Denz. 1073.) It declares that frequent Confession and Communion in those that live a heathen life is a mark of predestination; as to which St. Alphonsus Liguori observes, that it is truly a mark of reprobation; the other by Alexander VIII. (23; Denz. 1180), declares that none should be admitted to Communion but those in whom the love of God is most pure and free from admixture; a condition which would exclude all the human race.

One of the chief devices used by the directors of

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the Jansenist sect was to inculcate a false kind of reverence for Holy Communion, and lead men to deprive themselves of the benefit of this great Source of grace under pretence of showing respect to our Lord who instituted It as a means to communicate the merits of His Death. They succeeded only too well; and there are large districts where religion has not yet recovered from the mischief done; men too gladly caught at the suggestion that there was a ground of high principle on which they could refrain from doing their duty, and the harm has taken long to repair. Jansenism replaced the love of God by a fear which is not yet cast out. (1 St. John iv. 18.)

We have said that the right and duty of judging as to the frequency of Communion belong to the confessor alone. His discretion will be guided by two principles laid down by St. Thomas. (4. Dist. 12. q. 3. a. 1. gl. 2.) The Saint observes that we must take account of two things: first, the penitent's desire of union with Christ, which points towards daily Communion; and secondly, reverence for the Sacrament, which withdraws from this frequent reception. Experience will show what frequency will in the particular case secure an increase of love of God without reverence suffering.

724. *Both Kinds.*—The disciplinary regulations of the Western Church at the present day forbid the faithful to receive the Holy Eucharist under the species of wine, except in the case of the priest who is saying Mass. All the sects that arose out of the Protestant Reformation allow all who share

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in their eucharistic rites to receive the cup, and even in the fifteenth century the claim to receive under both kinds was urged by John Hus and his Bohemian followers. They received the name of Utraquists, from the Latin word signifying "both." (*uterque.*) The point has in fact for nearly five centuries been a test question between the Catholic Church and her Christian opponents.

It is curious that in the fifth century it was a badge of heresy in a layman to refuse to partake of the eucharistic chalice. Some sects of the Manicheans (n. 388) held that wine was created by an evil being and not by God; in consequence they refused to taste it, and extended their objection even to the Precious Blood under the species of wine. These heretics nevertheless desired to be reputed one with the Catholics, whose assemblies they frequented; and St. Leo bade the faithful observe if there were any who habitually communicated under the species of bread alone. (Serm. 42 [41], *De Quadrages,* c. 5; *P.L.* 54, 280.) This abstinence from the cup would betray the lurking Manichean.

It seems clear from this anecdote, that in the days of St. Leo, the faithful were at liberty to communicate in their public assemblies, under one kind or under both as they preferred; in earlier times, Communion under the species of bread alone was certainly held to be valid, for we read stories of the Sacred Host being carried to confessors of the faith in prison, which could not be done with the species of wine. Afterwards, the mode of communi-

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cating continued to be optional, but the superior convenience of receiving the Species of Bread alone caused this mode to prevail exclusively, although not enjoined by any express law. This practice prevailed in England as early as 616 (St. Beda, *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 5; *P.L.* 95, 90), and it was fully established throughout the West by the end of the twelfth century, although it long continued usual to give to each communicant an ablution of unconsecrated wine, to assist him in swallowing the Host. The fifteenth century saw the rise of the Hussite heresy, which among other things taught that reception under both kinds was a Divine ordinance; and in opposition to this error, the Council of Constance, in 1418, passed a decree establishing the present law. This was a disciplinary enactment. The doctrine that there is no Divine command of receiving under both kinds was declared to be of faith by the Council of Trent. (Denz. 812.)

The Hussites and their successors find their chief Scriptural support in the words of Christ already quoted (St. John vi. 54; n. 722), which require men to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood. But, to say nothing of the authority of the Church as supreme interpreter of Scripture (n. 159), we observe that the injunction here given says nothing about the mode in which it is to be fulfilled; and in fact, he that receives under one species alone receives the whole Christ, as we have shown. (n. 717.) Besides this, we find that exactly the same effects were ascribed by our Lord to the eating of His Body, as to the eating His Body and drinking His Blood;

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this is seen if the fifty-second verse is compared with the fifty-fourth, or the fifty-sixth with that which follows it.

The words of institution (St. Matt. xxvi. 28) contain a command to all to drink; but this was addressed to the Apostles, who were priests, ordained by Christ by the very act by which He instituted the Eucharist.

We have already (n. 156) spoken of the fraud whereby those responsible for the English Authorized Version of the Scriptures foisted in a false translation (1 Cor. xi. 27), by which they put *and* in place of the true word *or* (ἤ), and made St. Paul seem to enjoin Communion under both kinds. In the Scripture, the Eucharist is repeatedly described as the breaking of bread. (St. Luke xxiv. 30, 35; Acts ii. 46, &c.) There is no mention of the Chalice.

It is conceivable that the Church may see fit hereafter to change her present discipline on this subject, and permit, or even require, the laity to receive the Chalice. But this change is not likely to be made, unless circumstances arise which show clearly that no doubt is entertained by those who desire the change as to the doctrine of concomitance (n. 717), or as to the authority of the Church to regulate the matter. (n. 681.)

Probably the warmth of popular feeling with which the present question is often discussed, does not indicate a theological view so much as manifest the pride which makes men dislike all regulations put forward by authority.

We may here notice the law of receiving Holy

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Communion fasting, which is very ancient in the Church, being treated as familiar by Tertullian. (*Ad Uxorem*, ii. 5; *P.L.* 1. 1296.) It has no connection with any dogmatic point, and need not detain us.

725. *Adoration of the Eucharist.*—The Council of Trent, to which the doctrine concerning the Eucharist owes so much, condemned (Sess. 13, can. 6; Denz. 768) those who deny that the Blessed Eucharist is to be adored with external worship of that highest order which is called *latria* and is due to God alone. (n. 844.) The Reformers called this worship idolatry, and thereby found an excuse for stripping the altars of the precious vessels which the piety of the faithful had provided, for the honour of the Eucharistic God. The difference between them and the Council does not admit of argument at the present stage; we have shown (n. 535) that Christ is to be adored with absolute *latria*, in virtue of the Hypostatic Union; also, that Christ is really (nn. 706—708) and permanently (n. 718) in the consecrated Host; it follows necessarily that the Host is the object of absolute *latria*. All who loved Christ when on earth in His human form, would have done their best for His lodging and entertainment; and all who believe that they have Him with them under the Eucharistic veils, will let their love show itself by words of affection and by such adornment of the tabernacle as their means allow.

If it be objected that mistakes are possible, and adoration may be offered to what is mere unconsecrated bread, the reply must be that the fact is

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possible, but that it does not furnish an objection to our doctrine. Filial piety may be expressed by decorating the grave where a beloved parent is supposed to lie, and the act of virtue will not turn to vice merely because the sexton has made a mistake. (See nn. 313, 314.)

726. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has shown what are the peculiar effects worked by the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the soul of him that receives It worthily, and the enumeration of these prepares us to learn that some use of the Sacrament is necessary for adults, at least in virtue of a Divine precept. Some remarks are made as to the rules to be observed with regard to the frequency with which Holy Communion should be received; and the practice of the Church as to Communion under one kind only is defended. Lastly, we speak upon the adoration due to the Eucharist as to Christ Himself.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

727. *Subject of the Chapter.*—The Blessed Eucharist is not a Sacrament only, It is also a Sacrifice, and to offer this Sacrifice is the highest act of Christian worship. In the present chapter we shall explain what is meant by the word Sacrifice, and then show that the one offering of Himself made by Christ on Calvary, which was typified by the sacrifices of the Old Law, continues and will continue to the end of time to be renewed in the Christian Church, as often as Holy Mass is said. Some inquiry will then follow as to the essence of the Mass and other particulars.

728. *Nature of Sacrifice.*—We said something on the nature of Sacrifice when speaking of Christ the Redeemer (n. 540, viii.), and we pointed out the kinship that exists among the ideas expressed by the four words "priest," "victim," "sacrifice," and "altar," no one of which can be understood in its fulness apart from the other three. We must now develop the common idea more precisely.

Sacrifice is generally defined to be an offering made to God of a substantial and sensible thing, by its destruction, or by what is esteemed equivalent to destruction, instituted by authority in recognition

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of the majesty and supreme dominion of God; also, in the state of man where sin is found, to appease the Divine justice, and make avowal of guilt.

This definition is justified by comparing the ideas that attach to sacrifice in the minds of all men; the word is never applied to an act which does not address itself to the senses, except in cases where the use is plainly analogical and not literal. Especially it is not true, as is sometimes asserted, that all good works are sacrifices; this is certainly not the use of the word in Scripture, for sacrifice is plainly distinguished from mercy (Osee vi. 6), and from obedience (1 Kings xv. 22), which are acts of virtue, but are immaterial. Such acts are profitable, whoever he may be that does them, but sacrifice can be offered only by one appointed for the purpose (Hebrews v. 1); nor do they need to be performed in any particular place, but the Scripture constantly speaks of the place of Sacrifice as an altar. (Deut. xvi. 2, &c.)

The word "offer" is often used of sacrifice, but it is much wider, for, to say nothing of other instances, it is employed when men give materials for fashioning the ornaments used in Divine worship (Exodus xxxv. 5); but no one would call such offerings a sacrifice. An offering will not be a sacrifice unless it is made by an appointed person in an appointed place, as we have just seen; it must also be an act appropriated exclusively to honour God, for such marks of reverence as are used indifferently of God or creatures are never spoken of as sacrifices; and the thing sacrificed

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is always in some way abandoned and lost to the worshipper.

Those who write on the history of religion, have much to say as to the origin of the rite of sacrifice, which they discover to be almost universal throughout the world. They would find a clue to the explanation of many obscurities if they kept in sight the Christian doctrine that man sinned, and that Christ, who was God and Man, offered Himself in atonement for the sins of men; this offering was accepted by God, who was pleased to be worshipped by rites which prefigured and typified the one Sacrifice; and these rites are still used by nations who are ignorant that the type has been replaced by the reality. (See nn. 540—543.)

729. *The Doctrine of Antiquity.*—We proceed to show that the doctrine of the Christian Sacrifice was held in the early ages of the Church. This is so clear that it was freely admitted by Luther and his disciples, at the very time that they were using every effort to prove that it was a corruption. As in so many other cases, we should weaken the argument by transcribing a few only of the passages where the doctrine is expressed, and we must refer the reader to Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics.* When the Fathers speak of the Last Supper, where the Eucharist was instituted, they habitually use the words offer, immolate, host, victim, which are borrowed from the sacrificial rites of the heathen Romans, and they expressly declare that Christ then offered Himself as a true and full Sacrifice to God the Father, and commanded the Christian

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priests to imitate Him. They speak of the Christian Sacrifice as having succeeded to the typical sacrifices of the Old Law, and remark that Christ is truly offered by the hands of His ministers; these ministers, therefore, should study the laws of Moses which require sanctity in those that serve the altar, and consider that much higher holiness should be found in those whose work is to offer, not the type, but the reality.

Certain passages are found in early writers which seem to deny the presence of altars and sacrifices among Christians. Thus Celsus, the heathen philosopher, upbraids the Christians with having no altars, and Origen, in replying to him (*Contra Celsum*, viii. n. 17; *P.G.* 11, 1540), seems to admit the charge. The fact is that Celsus knew nothing of any altars but such as the heathen used, where fire burned and victims were consumed, and Origen answered him in the same sense; but the same Origen, when addressing initiated Christians (n. 703), plainly assumes that they were familiar with altars, for he reproves (Hom. 10, *In Josue*, n. 1; *P.G.* 12, 880) some of his hearers whose faith goes not further than to lead them to come to church, and bow to priests, show honour to the servants of God and do something perhaps towards decorating the altar, but does not induce them to amend their lives. Similar explanations will be found to be applicable to certain other stray passages that may be found in the Apologies.

730. *The Doctrine of Prophecy.*—The expressions used in Scripture describing the worship of the

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Christian Church are such as clearly point to its sacrificial character, as we proceed to show; and first we call attention to a passage in the Book of the Prophet Malachias. It is found in the tenth and eleventh verses of the first chapter. The Prophet rebukes the priests of his day for avarice and other vices, and proceeds thus, speaking in the Name of God:

10. Who is there among you that will shut the doors, and kindle the fire on My altar gratis? I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will not receive a gift of your hand.

11. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation: for My Name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts.

This prophecy plainly declares that a time shall come when the sacrifices of the Old Law shall be replaced by a new sacrifice. This appears from the Hebrew word by which the new rite is described, which is constantly used of sacrifice properly so called, and is therefore more precise than the word "oblation" by which it is translated; besides which this rite is opposed to the old rites which were certainly sacrifices; it is to be offered in all the earth, as opposed to those rites which were confined to Jerusalem, and by priests who replaced the degenerate priests of the race of Aaron. The explanation which represents this new rite as being merely prayer and praise, which is the ordinary

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Protestant interpretation, is seen to be altogether lame and inadequate. All the characters ascribed to the new rite are found in the Sacrifice of the Mass. Mass can be offered by ordained priests wherever a Christian altar is set up, it is in a special sense a pure oblation, for it is not defiled by the unworthiness of the minister (n. 682), and it is offered bloodlessly, which agrees with the ordinary use of the peculiar word adopted by the Prophet to describe it.

This interpretation of the prophecy is given frequently by the Fathers, and it is explicitly taught by the Council of Trent. (Sess. 22, cap. 8; Denz. 816.)

Another proof of the sacrificial character of the Eucharistic rite is found in the words of the Psalmist (cix. 4): The Lord hath sworn and He will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech. We see that this Psalm relates to Christ from the use He Himself made of it on another point. (St. Matt. xxii. 41—46; see also Hebrews vii. and n. 540.) Now the special character of the priesthood of Melchisedech is found in the nature of the offering made by him, which was bread and wine. (Genesis xiv. 18.) It follows that Christ, as Priest, offered bread and wine in sacrifice, and therefore the institution of the Eucharist was a sacrificial rite.

731. *The New Testament.*—That the Eucharist is a true Sacrifice offered to God follows from the words of institution found in the places already referred to. (n. 718.) We see from them that in

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this rite the Blood of Christ is poured out for the remission of sin, just as was done with the blood of the victim slain as a sin-offering in the Old Law. (Levit. iv. &c.) This Eucharistic pouring out consists in the separation between the Body and Blood effected by force of the words of consecration (n. 717); in consequence of these words, the Blood of Christ is visible in the chalice, under the species of wine, and separate from His Body. This is a true separation, notwithstanding the truth that Christ exists whole under each species. This sacramental separation is more directly pointed at by the words of the Greek text, "which *is* poured out," than by the Vulgate, which reads, "which *shall be* poured out," as if with reference to the coming Crucifixion. But there is no contradiction, for each effusion, real and mystic, will suggest the other to all who know the gracious dispensation.

The instruction given by St. Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. x. 14—21) concerning the duty of abstinence from all participation in the worship of false gods, confirms our doctrine. The Apostle points out that to eat of the flesh of a sacrifice, makes him who eats a sharer in the offering, as was seen in the Levitical ordinances; and he argues that it is therefore inconsistent for the one who eats the Bread that the Christians broke, also to eat the flesh of heathen sacrifices. This argument has no force unless the Christian rite be recognized as a Sacrifice.

A single and, so to speak, casual word will often show a writer's mind better than an express state-

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ment, such as may admit of various explanations. We may, therefore, notice the phrase chosen by St. Luke to tell us how the Christians of Antioch were employed when the Holy Ghost bade them ordain Saul and Barnabas as Apostles. They were "ministering" to the Lord. The Greek word (λειτουργούντων) occurs not unfrequently in the New Testament, and always refers to the sacrificial ministry of a priest. (St. Luke i. 23; Philipp. ii. 17; Hebrews ix. 21, x. 11, &c.); it exists in English in the form liturgy, which means the rite of offering Mass; it follows that the rite used by Christians in the days of the Apostles was regarded by St. Luke as sacrificial.

732. *The Essence of the Mass.*—The above considerations having established that a sacrificial rite exists in the Christian Church, there can be no question but that the Mass is this rite. No other can be plausibly suggested. But since the Mass consists of many actions, we have now to inquire which of these actions are essential to the Sacrifice, and whether any could be modified or omitted without rendering the whole invalid. Any unauthorized alteration of the prescribed rite is, of course, unlawful. (n. 681.)

We may pass over some unsupported conjectures as to the origin of the word "Mass" (*Missa*), and treat it as certain that the root is found in the Latin word meaning to send (*mitto*. It is probably not the participle, but a varied spelling of *missio*). The word first occurs in the writings of St. Ambrose, about the year 385 (Epist. 20, n. 4; *P.L.* 16, 996),

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and in later times it became common, signifying the dismissal of the assembly at the close of any ceremony. Examples of this meaning will be found in Du Cange. It was especially used for the conclusion of a religious service, when the congregation dispersed, and seems to have passed to the service itself, from the words in which the end was announced. In the Roman rite these words take the form which, if our explanation is correct, will mean, "Go, you are dismissed," and they have the appropriate place at the end. Another account makes these words be addressed to catechumens and other uninitiated persons (n. 703), directing them to withdraw at the time when the preliminaries were over and the more sacred part of the rite was about to begin; if this be meant, the place they hold in the Roman Missal must be due to some dislocation. Perhaps, there were originally two dismissions, one before the Canon addressed to the catechumens, the other at the end of all; and this other has alone been preserved. This would explain the frequent use of the plural, *Masses*, in places where we should expect *Mass*. It has been proposed to explain the word as meaning, "The Sacrifice has been sent up to Heaven," or the like, but the more literal and practical meaning is probably the true one.

It is worth while to remark that the study of the liturgies which have been from time to time in use among Christians, forms a distinct branch of ecclesiastical science, of no little difficulty, but leading to results that are often wholly unexpected and of high interest and importance.

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This may be a suitable place to notice the canon of Trent which condemns those who say that the vulgar tongue ought to be used in the Liturgy. (Sess. 22, can. 9; Denz. 833.) Living languages are in a constant state of flux, and their use in the Liturgy would surely and soon bring in changes of meaning. The popular wish for the vernacular is founded on the false idea that the words of the Mass are intended to constitute a common prayer. All present participate in the fruit of the Mass, as we shall see (n. 739), and in that sense it is common prayer; but the prayers used by the people during the Sacrifice vary according to the devotion of each, and may be altogether different from what the priest is saying. Of course, the Church could authorize the use of a living language, if it seemed expedient. (n. 724.)

We hold that the Roman Missal contains all that is essential to the Mass, not merely because the Mother and Mistress of Churches (n. 254) cannot have failed in so important a matter, but also because, with one exception, nothing is omitted which is found in other liturgies and has ever been regarded as absolutely necessary. This exception is the Epiclesis (ἐπὶ, καλέω), an invocation of God placed after the words of institution in some Eastern and at least one Spanish liturgies, by which He is asked to send the Holy Spirit, and by His glorious presence sanctify and change the elements into the Body and Blood of our Redemption. But these words cannot be regarded as doing more than excite devotion by expressing the miraculous change which

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took place when the words of institution were uttered, as is indicated by the Elevation of the Host; in fact, this rite was introduced at the time of the Berengarian controversy, in order to mark the instant of the consecration. For the reason that we have mentioned, there is no dogmatic doubt on the matter; but there is an historical controversy of no small interest as to what was the belief of St. Basil and other Eastern Fathers.

If the Roman rite is studied, four actions will be found which have been considered essential to the Sacrifice: the Consecration under the two species, the subsequent oblation which follows immediately after the Consecration of the Chalice, the breaking of the Sacred Host when a small portion is placed in the Precious Blood, and lastly the Communion of the priest. All these are certainly integral parts, the omission of any one of which maims the rite, but we hold that the first only is essential. The second is an act of prayer which does not deal with the Victim of the sacrifice, but may be repeated even when the whole ceremony is over; moreover, it was not used by Christ when instituting the Eucharist, nor has it always been in use in the Church. The third also was not used by Christ, and therefore is not essential.

As to the Communion of the priest, there is rather more difficulty, for it is most probable that Christ received His own Body and Blood at the Last Supper. But it is to be observed that the Communion of the priest is a private benefit to

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him personally, and does not affect others; also, the ceremonial consumption of a victim supposes the sacrifice to be completed. Still further, the mere receiving makes no change in the consecrated Elements, beyond removing them from place to place; and the change that occurs afterwards (n. 716) cannot be spoken of as a Sacrifice, for it is no exercise of the will of the priest. The Communion may be taken mystically to represent the burial of Christ, and the burial implies the Death; but the Sacrifice is the mystic Death itself.

It remains, therefore, that the essence of the Sacrifice is found in the double consecration, in which all that is needed has place. By force of the words, the Body of Christ is under the species of bread, and the Blood of Christ under the species of wine, and thus Christ is exhibited as dead, and in a state where He can be used as Food and Drink.

The above doctrine is that which approves itself to a large number of theologians, but it must not be regarded as absolutely certain; we have no express definition of the Church upon the subject. One consequence must be noticed as seeming to follow. If a priest, saying Mass, pronounced the appointed words over the Host, that Host is consecrated, and the consecration remains, even though sudden death or other cause prevent that priest from consecrating the Chalice. But the Sacrifice will not have been offered, for there has been no mystic representation of the Death of Christ. This priest had, as we assume, the intention of perform-

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ing the double Consecration, and of sacrificing, nor does the unforeseen frustration of this intention vitiate it. But suppose a priest begin the ceremony with the intention of consecrating bread alone, and not wine, he might utter the words over the bread, but they would be void of effect, for this priest would not have the intention of doing what the Church does (n. 683); he would not intend to offer the Sacrifice. It need not be said that he would be guilty of a most wicked sacrilege.

We may mention the view held by De Lugo, Franzelin, and many others, that the essence of the Sacrifice is found in this, that Christ exhibits Himself shorn of visible Humanity, and reduced to a state in which He can be united to His people as Food and Drink. This result would be found if bread alone were consecrated, or wine alone; but it is to be observed that the Divine ordinance requires the double Consecration, and there is no true Sacrifice, except when this ordinance is observed. The solitary Consecration might have been the Sacrifice, had God so pleased, but, in fact, He has not so pleased.

It is to be observed that in all Masses, the Victim is Christ our Lord, and that He is also the Chief Priest, acting by the hands and lips of His human minister. All Masses are, therefore, so far one Sacrifice with the Sacrifice that was offered on the altar of the Cross on Calvary; at the same time, it may be said that there are many Sacrifices, if we look to the sacrificial action which is repeated.

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733. *Recapitulation.*—This important chapter has explained the nature of Sacrifice, and has given proof of the doctrine of the Church that in the Mass a true Sacrifice is offered to God; and something has been said as to two among the various opinions held by theologians concerning the essence of the Mass.

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CHAPTER V.

THE EFFECTS OF THE MASS.

734. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In this chapter we shall set forth some points of established doctrine concerning the ends for which the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered; and then some remarks will be made on certain questions concerning the value, the fruit, and the efficacy of the rite.

It will be observed that since the Eucharist is both a Sacrament and a Sacrifice, we must distinguish the effects of the Sacrament (n. 721), which are confined to those who receive It, and the effects of the Sacrifice, which, as we shall see, extend both to all who in any way join in offering It, and also to those for whom It is offered. There are many speculative points connected with this matter as to which theologians are not agreed.

735. *Worship.*—Every Sacrifice is a protestation of God's supreme dominion and man's dependence on Him (n. 728), and is therefore an act of worship; and this worship is absolute *latria*, such as is offered to God alone. It is a particular mode in which prayer is made. (n. 607.) The first and principal end for which the Sacrifice is offered is that it should be an act of this worship.

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At the same time, there is nothing to prevent this act of worship of God being offered at a time and place chosen because it recalls the memory of some Martyr or other Saint; and the same opportunity may be taken of seeking his intercession. But this is quite different from offering the Sacrifice to the dead man: we may worship him in a certain sense (n. 844), but the worship is not *latria*, and therefore cannot take the form of Sacrifice to him. This distinction is so obvious that we are hardly prepared to learn that it has been overlooked: nevertheless, the Council of Trent found it necessary to condemn those who call it an imposture to say Mass in honour of the Saints, and for obtaining their intercession with God, according to the intention of the Church. (Sess. 22, can. 5; Denz. 829.) The subject of the intercession of the Saints belongs to our closing Treatise on the Four Last Things.

It is a very ancient practice of the Church to celebrate Mass at the tombs of Martyrs on each recurring anniversary of the death: the birth-day, as it is called. Tertullian speaks of it as the usual custom (*De Coron. Mil.* c. 3; *P.L.* 2, 79); and St. Augustine expressly recognizes the distinction on which we have been insisting: "We do not build temples to our Martyrs as to gods, but churches in memory of dead men whose spirits are living with God: we erect altars in the churches, and offer sacrifice on them, not to the Martyrs, to the one God of the Martyrs and of ourselves." (*De Civit. Dei*, xxii. 10; *P.L.* 41, 772.)

736. *Thanksgiving.*—That the Christian Sacrifice

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is an act of thanksgiving is obvious from many passages of the Liturgy, as for instance, the opening words of the Preface. In fact, a very large part of all the worship offered by the Church and by each individual Christian consists of acts of thanksgiving to God for all the favours He bestows upon the race of mankind in general and on each member of it; and it would be strange if this element were omitted from that rite where the highest of all these favours, the Redemption, is commemorated and in some sense enacted anew. This end of the Sacrifice is indicated by the word Eucharist, which signifies thanksgiving (εὖ, χάρις); the name seems to be suggested by the act of Christ, who did not consecrate the bread until He had given thanks. (St. Luke xxii. 19.)

The memory of the Martyrs (n. 735) was kept up when Mass was celebrated in thanksgiving for their victory.

737. *Forgiveness of Sin.*—The Mass is in a peculiar sense a propitiatory rite, by which forgiveness of sin and remission of punishment is obtained for those who "with a true heart and right faith, with fear and reverence, contrite and penitent, approach to God," as the Council of Trent expresses it. (Sess. 22, cap. 2; Denz. 817.) The Sacrifice of the New Law is not inferior to those prescribed by Moses, which were mere types of that Sacrifice of the Cross which is now a reality; and among these, the sacrifices for sin were prominent. In fact, St. Paul treats it as the proper work of a priest to offer sacrifices for sin (Hebrews vi.), and Christ

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Himself expressly declares that in the Eucharist, His Blood is poured out for the remission of sin. (St. Matt. xxvi. 28.) When we speak on the general subject of prayer for the dead, we shall show that the Sacrifice of the Mass avails for the departed, and not for the living alone. (n. 829.)

738. *Impetration.*—The Mass is a kind of prayer (n. 607), and as with other prayer impetration is one of its principal fruits. This follows from what has been said in the last paragraph, for that which avails to secure the great favour of the pardon of sin will not fail to gain also those lesser favours to which the promise of prayer extends. (n. 609.)

739. *Value. Efficacy. Fruit.*—In the Mass we may distinguish the Value, which is its dignity and virtue arising from the infinite excellence of the Victim, who is also the High Priest of the Sacrifice. This value is therefore infinite; as infinite as was the value of the Sacrifice offered on the Cross; for, in fact, the two Sacrifices are essentially the same. (n. 732.)

The Efficacy of the Mass is that which it effects, and therefore corresponds to the four ends for which it is offered (nn. 735—738): we have now to consider how these effects are produced. The first and second effects which relate to God are produced by the very fact that the Sacrifice is offered: whenever the act is validly performed, the Victim is offered to God, and by this oblation God is worshipped and thanked: this effect is therefore *ex opere operato.* (n. 673.) Also, it is held that

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remission of guilt and punishment is wrought *ex opere operato* with this distinction; that satisfaction (n. 829) is the immediate effect of the Mass, which works forgiveness of sin only by infallibly obtaining actual grace for him on whose behalf it is offered: which grace, however, may fail to be efficacious (n. 583, viii.), for want of the co-operation of the recipient. As to the fourth effect of the Mass, its impetratory power is like that of any other prayer.

The Fruit of the Mass is its effect considered as applied to men. This fruit may be looked on in two ways, as we have regard to Him that offers or to the Victim that is offered. So far as the Sacrifice is offered by Christ, the High Priest, and works *ex opere operato*, its fruit is independent of the conduct of the man who acts as minister of Christ; but the merit and devotion of the human priest will measure the greater or less effect of his Mass, as of other prayer made by him, and working *ex opere operantis*. (n. 673.)

The merits of the Victim are applied variously to different classes of people, and it is usual to distinguish a three-fold fruit: general, special, and most special. The general fruit is that which corresponds to the Sacrifice so far as it is offered by the priest acting in the name of the whole Church. All the members of the Church participate in this fruit, and the loss of this benefit is one of the evils that attend the loss of that membership, however involuntary and inculpable the loss may be. A larger share is obtained by those who are brought into

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closer connection with the particular Sacrifice, as being present at it, and still more as ministering to the priest. This fruit is *ex opere operantis*, by way of impetration, and therefore depends on the merit and devotion of each participant.

The special fruit is that gained by the person or persons for whom the Mass is offered, according to the intention of the priest: if he celebrate without forming an intention, this fruit redounds to the benefit of the Church at large. The special fruit of impetration is effected *ex opere operato*, as is also the remission of punishment of sin, provided there is no obstacle in the way. We have said that the value of the Mass is infinite in itself, and therefore it is not exhausted when applied to men; and most probably when it is offered for many, each receives the same benefit as if it were offered for him alone. The point, however, is not free from doubt, for all depends ultimately on the will of God, as to which we have no certain knowledge: but it is to be remembered that two or more serious obligations to say Mass for particular intentions cannot be fulfilled by a single Mass.

The application must be the act of the will of the priest that offers the Mass, and cannot be controlled by others. We cannot, therefore, accept the opinion of some who hold that a religious cannot validly apply his Mass to a particular intention against the will of his Superior. If this opinion were accepted, it would follow that lawful superiors could control their subjects' intentions in other cases, and therefore that the Church could invali-

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date the administration of Sacraments by heretics and schismatics: and this is a power which has never been recognized. All ordinations, for example, are treated as valid or at least doubtful, unless it is judged to be certain that there was a fatal defect of matter or form: it has never been supposed that the Church can nullify the intention of the minister, however unlawfully he is acting.

The most special fruit is that which belongs to the priest, as a private person doing the good work of offering the Sacrifice. It is probable that the priest cannot make over this fruit to any other person. It is greater, according to the merit and devotion of him that says the Mass.

740. *Private Masses.*—The Lutheran conception of the Eucharist made it essentially a congregational act, so that Private Masses, when the priest alone received the Elements, were denounced as superstitious. This is the view taken in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. (Rubric at the end of the Communion Service.)

It is, of course, diametrically opposed to the Catholic view that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice, consummated by the double consecration, and by which honour is given to God, even when it is offered by a priest in solitude, where he has not the aid of a server.

741. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has given answers to some of the questions that may arise concerning the effects of the Mass. It has been necessary to pass over many other questions of great interest.

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742. *Close of the Treatise.*—The Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist has been proved, and it is shown that Transubstantiation is the only mode in which this Presence can be explained intelligibly. Certain consequences of this doctrine follow, and then we say something on the use of the Eucharist. Passing then from the Sacrament to the Sacrifice, we prove Its existence, and that Its essence is found in the double consecration. Some remarks on the effects of the Sacrifice close the Treatise.

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Treatise the Nineteenth.

The Sacrament of Penance.

CHAPTER I.

NATURE OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

743. *Plan of the Treatise.*—We come now to consider the means provided by God for the remission of post-baptismal sin, and we shall show that this grace is the proper work of a peculiar Sacrament, called the Sacrament of Penance. We shall establish the existence of this Sacrament, which we shall find to be instituted under the form of a trial and judgment, in which the subject of the Sacrament, or penitent as he is called, has the place of the culprit, and the minister is judge. It will be shown that the Sacrament cannot be received by any penitent who does not perform three acts; he must have contrition or sorrow for his sin, must make his sin known to the judge, or confessor, and he must have readiness to do something which shall be enjoined him by way of satisfaction for his sin, which work is assisted by Indulgences. Lastly, there is much to say on the qualifications and duties of the judge.

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The Treatise will therefore fall into five chapters: the Nature of the Sacrament, Contrition, Confession, Satisfaction with Indulgences, and the Minister of Penance.

744. *Subject of the Chapter.*—We shall show in this chapter that the Church of God has received the power to apply the merits of Christ to the souls of repentant sinners, conveying to them forgiveness of all post-baptismal sin; and that there is a Sacrament appointed for this purpose, distinct from Baptism. We shall find that this Sacrament, like the others, is based upon a natural institution to which it gives a spiritual meaning: as Baptism is based on the cleansing effect of washing, Confirmation on the use of oil in preparation for a combat, and the Holy Eucharist on a banquet, so the Sacrament of Penance takes the shape of a trial and sentence.

We shall begin by setting forth the defined doctrine of the Church on the subject.

745. *Catholic Doctrine.*—The Council of Trent (Sess. 14, can. 1—4; Denz. 789—792) pronounces an anathema (n. 494) against all who deny certain points of doctrine; these include the following:

1. Those who say that Penance in the Catholic Church is not truly and properly a Sacrament instituted by Christ our Lord for reconciling the faithful to God as often as after Baptism they fall into sin.

2. Those who, confounding the Sacraments, say that Baptism is itself the Sacrament of Penance, as though these two Sacraments were not distinct, and

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that therefore Penance cannot rightly be called a second plank in the shipwreck. (nn. 748, 751.)

3. Those who say that the words of our Lord and Saviour, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained," are not to be understood of the power of forgiving or retaining sins in the Sacrament of Penance, as the Catholic Church has always from the beginning understood; and who twist them to the authority of preaching the Gospel, contrary to the institution of this Sacrament.

4. Those who deny that in order to the entire and perfect remission of sins three acts are required in the Penitent, being as it were the matter of the Sacrament of Penance, namely Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction, which are called three parts of Penance; or who say that there are two parts only of Penance, namely, terror that strikes the conscience when sin is recognized, and faith arising from the Gospel or from absolution, by which each one believes that his sins are forgiven him through Christ. (See n. 627.)

The rest of the teaching of the Council on this Sacrament will be found in its proper place. (nn. 760, 762, 766, 776.)

746. *Various Views.*—The older adversaries of the Catholic Church, who objected to her doctrine on the Sacrament of Penance, restricted her power, alleging that there were certain sins which could never be pardoned by the Church. The Protestant Reformers enlarged the scope of forgiveness, allow-

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ing that no sin was unpardonable, and teaching that pardon could be obtained on less onerous conditions than those exacted by the Church.

We have already had occasion to mention the enthusiastic Phrygian sect of the Montanists. (n. 111.) Among other errors, these men set up an exaggeratedly high standard of morality; for example, they absolutely condemned second marriage of widowers or widows, and taught that it was unlawful to dissemble the faith in order to avoid martyrdom at the hands of persecutors, and still more to endeavour to escape death by flight: a doctrine which naturally had the result of leading to many apostasies, when the courage of Christians broke down under the torture to which they had wilfully exposed themselves. Among other things, they maintained that the three sins of idolatry, murder, and apostasy were so heinous, that the Church had no power to grant forgiveness of them. These three sins were, they held, irremissible in this life, while all others were, in their language, venial or pardonable: where it is to be observed that the word "venial" is used in a sense altogether different from that which we have explained as in use in the Catholic Church. (n. 596.)

Montanism is best known from the vehement writings of the African lawyer, Tertullian, the rigoristic influence of which continued long to be felt in the province where he lived.

Idolatry, which was one of the irremissible sins of the Montanists, extended to all those forms of unworthy compliance with the demands of heathen

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persecutors which were included under the term Lapse. (n. 133.) Numerous cases of lapse occurred about the year 250, when Decius renewed the policy of persecution to the death which had been in abeyance for some time; and when peace was restored, there was much difference of opinion as to the terms of readmission to Catholic communion that should be offered to the fallen. There was no doubt that the Church had power to grant forgiveness for this and all other sins, which would be ratified in Heaven (nn. 613, 750); nor would external communion with the Church be refused, except perhaps in case of repeated lapse. But the discipline of the time required that a long period of penance should precede reconciliation (n. 770): which period, however, was often shortened if the sinners were able to obtain recommendations from men who had faithfully borne the trial of imprisonment for Christ. (n. 771.) The Church of Carthage furnished a large number of cases of lapse, as well as many instances of confessors who had stood firm: many applications were made for letters of indulgence, and were freely acceded to. The Bishop, St. Cyprian, thought that he saw danger of the whole penitential discipline of the Church being overthrown, especially as he found that priests acted on the recommendations of the confessors as a matter of course: the Saint held that each case ought to be brought before the Bishop, who would judge it on its merits, giving due weight to the terms of any letter of recommendation.

The further history of the controversy does not

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concern us. We mention it only because it was made an excuse for the first recorded case of dispute as to a Papal election. On the death of Pope St. Fabian in 252, Cornelius was chosen to take his place—the place of Peter, as St. Cyprian incidentally remarks (Epist. 10, *Ad Antonian.; P.L.* 3, 797): this election was a great disappointment to Novatian, a Roman priest who had set his heart on the dignity, and who was encouraged by Novatus, a priest who had passed from Carthage to Rome, to challenge the right of Cornelius. At the suggestion, as appears, of Novatus, Novatian declared that Cornelius was incapable of holding office in the Church, as being tainted with the guilt of lapse, at least so far as having communicated with the lapsed: and he procured some adherents to go through the form of electing him to be Pope, after which he had himself consecrated Bishop. To strengthen his position, he upheld the doctrine that the Church had no power to grant forgiveness for grave sin of whatever kind; all such, he said, must be left to the judgment of God alone. (Socrates, *H.E.* iv. 28; *P.G.* 67, 527.) It will be remembered (n. 189) that the Donatists justified their schism by similar teaching.

747. *Modern Errors.* — Novatianism and its kindred errors soon died away, and for many centuries no question was raised as to the power of the Church to absolve from all sin, though only on condition of certain acts done by the sinner. Luther himself, in the beginning of his career, was inclined to allow Penance to retain its place as a

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Sacrament: but he discovered that no such view was consistent with his fundamental doctrine of justification by faith only (n. 632), for this act of faith is internal to the sinner and unconnected with any external rite or Sacrament. Protestants in general agree with Luther in refusing to recognize any Sacrament of Penance, and many of them hold more or less decidedly the Lutheran doctrine on justification: it is difficult to say what view as to the conditions of forgiveness of sin is current among those to whom this doctrine is not acceptable: probably they do not conceive that any act of forgiveness is needed, but hold that a sinner is forgiven by God *ipso facto* if he abandon his sin: they do not look on each act of sin as staining the soul, and needing to be removed, but they regard it rather as an indication of an evil disposition, which can be changed in a moment by a mere act of the will.

It will be observed that the fourth of the Canons which we have quoted (n. 745) from the Council of Trent is directed against the Lutheran doctrine. The Anglican Establishment teaches (art. 16) that after we have received the Holy Ghost we may depart from grace, and fall into sin, and by the grace of God we may rise again and amend our lives. But, as we have seen (n. 664), it denies that Penance is to be counted for a Sacrament of the Gospel, and it is silent as to the steps to be taken by one who having fallen into sin wishes to rise again: this silence may be explained as countenancing either the Lutheran view or that other

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which we mentioned lately as probably the current Protestant view. But the Book of Common Prayer, condescending, as it would seem, to the weakness of some people who yearn after an exterior rite assuring them of forgiveness, presents us with a graduated scale of what are called absolutions. They will be found given in a future page. (n. 779.)

748. *The Power to Forgive.*—On the evening of the first Easter Day, our newly risen Lord appeared to His disciples, and condescended to give them proof of the reality of His Resurrection: and "He breathed on them and said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (St. John xx. 22, 23.) The words, addressed to the Apostles and perhaps some few others, plainly confer some power over the sins of men which is spoken of as forgiving and retaining, and there is no need to quote the Fathers to show that this is the meaning which has always been given to the phrase. Christ had already declared to His Apostles that whatsoever they should bind upon earth should be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever they should loose on earth should be loosed in Heaven (St. Matt. xviii. 18): and thus the Apostles received a part of the power which had been previously conferred on St. Peter (St. Matt. xvi. 19), where the grant is introduced by the promise of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. This grant to St. Peter and the rest is parallel to that which we have already quoted from St. John, so that the texts justify the

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ordinary language of the Church by which the authority over sin granted to her is included in what is spoken of as the power of the keys. The texts were constantly used by the Catholics in the time of the Montanist controversy, as we learn from the attempts of Tertullian to combat the argument founded on them (*De Pudicit*, c. 21; *P.L.* 2, 1023); and they were used similarly by the Fathers who maintained the faith of the Church against the party of Novatian. (n. 746.) Those who in the third century denied to the Church power over all sins were regarded as heretics; and this of itself establishes what was the tradition that had come down from the Apostles. (n. 103.)

That the power of the keys is wider than the authority to baptize is plain from all the arguments by which its existence is established. The texts quoted from St. Matthew and St. John say nothing about the rite in which water was raised and made effectual for washing away sin: nor is there any trace that either Montanus or Novatian questioned the fulness of the efficacy of the Sacrament of regeneration. (n. 692.) The point was never doubted until comparatively modern times, which is the reason why the Fathers do not distinctly testify to the distinction between Baptism and Penance: but we may notice the argument of St. Pacian (Epist. 3, *Ad Sympron.* n. 11; *P.L.* 13, 1070), who urges that if the Church can by Baptism convey forgiveness to men who are not her members, much more will she be able to extend the same favour to those who have already been admitted to her

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membership. Since Baptism cannot be repeated, St. Pacian must have believed that forgiveness was conveyed by some distinct act.

The Fathers frequently speak of a sinner as a shipwrecked man, who seeks to support himself on a plank, and when the first fails him, grasps a second. The second plank is the Sacrament of Penance, which avails for one who has lost the grace of Baptism, and is again plunged in the abyss of sin. We have here a forcible expression of the distinction between the two Sacraments. An ordinary Protestant evasion represents the texts that we have quoted as giving no more than authority to declare that God remits sin. But the words, "you shall remit," "you shall loose," point to some far greater power conferred on the Apostles; and we must notice that it is not conferred until after Christ had performed the significant sacramental action of breathing on them and saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost:" it would be a meagre sequel to this solemn consecration, if they were empowered to do no more than preach the doctrine of forgiveness: this ministry requires no special qualifications, for it is exercised effectively by every one that can read the Divine promises of mercy recorded in the Scriptures. Nor, in this view, is it conceivable how the controversies could have arisen which gave so much trouble for a century or more.

749. *Binding and Loosing.*—Doubts have been raised as to the meaning of the words Binding and Loosing which we have quoted from St. Matthew.

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It is said that the corresponding Hebrew words were used in the Jewish schools to signify the declaration that some act was prohibited or allowed; and it is suggested that Christ employed the words in this sense. We do not deny that this power was included in that fulness of authority which Christ communicated to His Apostles; but we deny that the authority went no further. There is no trace of the alleged use of the words "bind" and "loose" having ever been common; it was confined to the schools: and the parallel place of St. John, which speaks of forgiveness of sins, does not admit the suggested explanation.

The power of binding is sometimes represented as though it meant no more than to abstain from loosing. But both the words have a positive force, and there is no ground for explaining one more than the other as a mere negation. When a power is granted, the power not to use it follows as a matter of course, and does not need to be granted expressly. It follows therefore that the Church has some special power of fixing the terms on which sinners are to be pardoned, and of imposing on them the duty of making satisfaction. (n. 769.)

It is obvious that this power which the Church has received from Christ must be exercised by her, not as if it were her own, but in accordance with the rules that He has established.

They by whom the power of the Church to bind or to loose is exercised have the duty and authority to judge what sins are to be bound and what are to be loosed: they must pass judgment upon each

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case, and decide whether the more lenient course is to be taken, or whether it is necessary to have recourse to severity. The power is therefore judicial, and is compared by St. Ambrose (in Psalm xxxviii. 14; *P.L.* 14, 1057) and others to the function assigned to the priests in the Mosaic law of judging cases of leprosy, and pronouncing whether the disease is present or when it has disappeared. (Levit. xiii. 3, &c.) Manifestly, the priest could not judge what was the character of the ailment, unless the sick man showed himself: in like manner, the Church cannot do her office in regard to sin, unless the sinner make known all the wounds which his soul has received.

750. *The Power all-embracing.*—At the present day it is probable that few will be found to admit that the authority to forgive sins has been entrusted to the Church, who at the same time exclude certain sins from the scope of this power: Montanist and Novatian error does not recommend itself to the modern mind. The opposition that arose when these heresies were first broached sufficiently proves what was then the faith of the Christian people, and it may suffice if we quote the vigorous denunciation of St. Fulgentius (*De Remissione Peccat.* i. 23; *P.L.* 65, 547.) "He that believes not in the power which resides in the Church to forgive all sins cuts himself off from all pardon for sin if he persevere in this hardness of an impenitent heart, and leave this world severed from the communion of the Church." It will be admitted that there is no doubt as to the belief of the writer of these words.

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At the same time, it cannot be denied that there are certain texts of Scripture which seem at first sight to teach the possibility of men sinning so outrageously as to put themselves beyond the bounds of pardon. We have already spoken of the chief among these (n. 613), and the principles of interpretation there laid down apply to all the remaining passages: either great difficulty is spoken of as impossibility because it is ordinarily found to be insuperable; or the thing that is pronounced to be unattainable will be found to be a temporal favour, and not anything essential to salvation.

Certain passages of the Fathers merely echo the words of Scripture, and must be understood in the same sense; or they admit of explanation on the principles mentioned above.

It must be carefully observed that they who have taken the severer view as to the meaning of the text about the sin against the Holy Ghost, and the like, held that these sins did more than exclude perpetually from the external communion of the Church: they thought that God Himself refused to accept the repentance of a man who had sinned so grievously. These two points are totally distinct. A Christian who sins grievously no longer belongs to the soul of the Church (n. 186), and if he die in this state he passes to Hell: one who incurs excommunication (n. 196) is cut off from the body of the Church, and has a duty of seeking reconciliation: but he does not necessarily lose his soul, even if he die unreconciled. The question agitated in the third

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century touched the right of the Church to readmit the lapsed and other heinous sinners to her external communion, the membership of her body: restoration to the grace of God was to be sought by means of a different character, and was an internal matter. The Sacrament of Penance is concerned with this last restoration to the soul of the Church.

The controversy with the heretics established the right of the Church to readmit all repentant sinners to communion, and this is a point of unchanging doctrine. But it was a matter of changeable discipline to fix the terms on which this favour should be granted, and the practice varied considerably in different times and countries, according to the discretion of the Bishops. It is certain that even perpetual exclusion from the communion of the Church was not unknown, and it has been supposed that this was the result intended as often as the word maranatha (n. 494) was used in the sentence; and there is much difference of opinion among historians as to whether there were not some sins the censure on which was for a time treated as perpetual throughout the Church. In connection with this matter, two points are to be carefully observed: that difference of practice in neighbouring dioceses did not involve estrangement between the Bishops, as St. Cyprian tells us (Epist. 10 (55), n. 21; *P.L.* 3, 811); and that even those who died under an unrelaxed excommunication might nevertheless secure salvation. (St. Aug. Epist. 153, n. 7; *P.L.* 33, 656.)

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The history of the varying discipline of the Church on the subject of admitting sinners to communion was much discussed during the controversy with the Jansenists. (n. 390, vi.) These sectaries professed to advocate great strictness of discipline, and they wished to restore what they conceived to be the practice of antiquity: their true object being to substitute a rule of fear for the rule of love, and to lead men to think it hopeless to attempt to live a Christian life. The same policy led them to withdraw men from Holy Communion. (n. 723.) The doctrine of the Synod of Pistoia on this subject was condemned by Pope Pius VI. (*Auctorem Fidei*, 135; Denz. 1398; and see n. 189.)

751. *Penance a Sacrament.*—We have shown so far that Christ has given to His Church authority to retain or remit sins, on conditions to be assigned by her; that this authority is something different from the right to baptize (n. 748), that it is to be exercised by way of judgment and sentence (n. 749): and that it extends to all post-baptismal sin, however grievous. (n. 750.) We have now to show that this power is exercised by the administration of a Sacrament, and this follows easily from what has been said. The exercise of the authority confers grace, for it works the remission of sin, as is expressly stated in the texts of the Gospel that we quoted (n. 748); and this grace is given by the outward act, whereby the minister, who is judge in the sacramental tribunal, pronounces his sentence, binding or loosing. We see therefore

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that all the characters required in a Sacrament are present.

This theological reason prepares us to find that the traditional doctrine of the Church places Penance among the true Sacraments. This truth is proved by the argument from prescription (n. 665) of which we have made frequent use, for Penance is always reckoned with the other six as often as we find an enumeration of the Sacraments strictly so called; and so well was the usage established that even Luther, for a time, hesitated to discard it. (n. 747.) In the times when the word Sacrament was still used vaguely (n. 661), the same truth is witnessed to by those Fathers who couple Baptism and Penance together, as being alike in that they work remission of sin; but as being unlike, in that one can be received once only, while the other can be repeated, as needed; and that the one works perfect cleansing from guilt and punishment, while the other leaves a debt of satisfaction. All this is implied in the words of St. Jerome, who calls Penance a plank in the shipwreck (Epist. 1224; *P.L.* 22, 1046)—a phrase which gave special offence to Luther: the same image had already been used by Tertullian (*De Pœnit.* c. 4; *P.L.* 1, 1233), who also speaks of the second beacon that guides to salvation. (*Ibid.* c. 12; *P.L.* 1, 1247.) Other Patristic descriptions of Penance represent it as a second Baptism, a Baptism of tears, a toilsome Baptism. St. Jerome tells us that there are two doors which give admittance to the Church: Baptism is used for the first visit, Penance gives

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entry to those who have left for a time and wish to return. (In Sophon. i. 10; *P.L.* 25, 1349, and in Osee xii. 9; *P.L.* 25, 927.) The words of Origen on the matter are well worth notice: after speaking of Baptism, he says that there is another narrower and more toilsome road to the forgiveness of sin, by Penance, when the sinner waters his bed with tears and blushes not to lay open all his sins to the priest of the Lord, and seek the means of salvation. (Hom. 2, in Levit. n. 4; *P.G.* 12, 418.)

These expressions, and others which might be quoted in large number, sufficiently show that the Fathers treat Baptism and Penance as rites of the same nature: and no one who recognizes the existence of Sacraments excludes Baptism from the number: the teaching of tradition therefore shows that Penance is truly and properly a Sacrament of the Gospel.

It will be convenient to reserve what has to be said as to the matter and form of the Sacrament for the chapter where we speak of the minister. (nn. 774, 775.)

752. *Recapitulation.*—In this chapter we have shown from Scripture that the Church has power of forgiving or retaining sin in the proper sense of the word, as well as of admitting contrite sinners to her external communion, or inflicting on them the spiritual punishment of exclusion. Some particulars are given as to the history of Church discipline on the subject, and it is shown that even those who died without obtaining external reconciliation were not held to be cut off from hope of salvation.

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The mode of exercise of the power of the Church extended to all sin, and was conceived to be in the form of the judgment of a tribunal, as is proved from the Fathers: and lastly the same witnesses are shown to teach that Penance is a Sacrament no less truly than Baptism.

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CHAPTER II.

CONTRITION.

753. *Subject of the Chapter.*—Penance is the Sacrament appointed by God to convey forgiveness to the soul of every Christian that sins. Whatever may be said as to the absolute power of God (n. 419), it is certain that in the existing order, forgiveness is never extended except to such sinners as have sorrow for their sins, and are resolved to sin no more. This sorrow and purpose of amendment are acts of a special virtue, which, like the Sacrament to which it corresponds, has the name of Penance. Acts of the virtue of Penance are therefore required before the Sacrament of Penance can be received, and they constitute one part of that Sacrament, which is called Contrition. In this chapter we shall speak in more detail of the virtue of Penance, and then point out what is required in one who seeks the grace of the Sacrament.

754. *The Virtue of Penance.*—Whenever a free being withdraws the act of his will which he previously had formed and wills the contrary, he may be said to repent, or feel penitent. Thus, when men sinned and God resolved to destroy the race by a flood, the sacred writer uses a strongly anthro-

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popathic (n. 366) expression, and declares that it repented God, or God repented, that He had made man upon the earth (Genesis vi. 6); and Judas, repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests. (St. Matt. xxvii. 3.) But in neither case was the penitence here spoken of an act of virtue, for in the first instance the expression is purely metaphorical; and in the second, the penitent was not led to his change of mind by a proper motive: he had no hope, as is proved by his suicide, and without hope there cannot be any true turning away from evil and approach to God.

In Penance, as in other virtues, we may distinguish the material object, or that with which the virtue is concerned from the formal object, or point of view from which it considers this object. The formal object of Penance is hatred of sin, as being offensive to God, and it involves the strict duty of observing the law of God and of repairing insults committed against the Divine Majesty; there is no regret without the purpose of not persisting in the insulting course of conduct. It will be observed that reparation is required, and that mere cessation from evil is not enough; and this truth results from the consideration that every breach of strict duty involves an obligation of restitution to the person to whom the duty was owing. Penance is in fact a part of the virtue of justice. (St. Thomas, p. 3. q. 85. a. 3.)

The material object of the virtue of Penance is sin heretofore committed by him that repents. The name of sin is most fully and properly applicable to

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mortal sin (n. 596), but the virtue extends also to venial sin by which God is offended as truly though not as grievously as by mortal sin. Penance is not concerned with the act of sin, for no one regrets that he does a certain act at the very time that he is doing it; but the penitent sinner regrets the presence of the abiding stain which is left in his soul by way of habit, as the result of his past sin (n. 596), and he also regrets the past act which produced this stain. Original sin, in which the sinner's own will had no part, is not properly the object of Penance; this object however embraces, in a manner, all future sin considered as being what the repentant man may possibly commit.

We have shown that no man is excluded from the grace of God, however many and enormous his sins may have been. (n. 613.) No sin, nor accumulation of sins, therefore, is too great to be the object of Penance.

755. *Detestation of Sin.*—The mind to turn away from sin and offend no more is hatred of the evil. Detestation superadds to hatred the wish that the sin had not been committed, with sorrow that the past cannot be undone; and there is no act of the virtue of Penance without this detestation.

It will be observed that detestation of sin, as here explained, does not include any formal act of love of God, who has been offended. The consideration that God deserves to be loved may have furnished the motive for the act of detestation, and a formal act of love may have gone before it, and in fact commonly has done so. But distinct acts are

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required if we adhere to an object that is loved and shun an object that is hated. This, at least, seems to be the better opinion on a controverted question.

Detestation of sin will be worthless unless it is absolute, excluding every sort of condition. This is obvious, for no repair of the outrage which sin has done to the Divine honour is effected by an act of sorrow that is limited by some restriction. Also all virtuous detestation of sin is universal, extending to all sin. This universality may be secured, even though one sin alone is formally present to the mind, if only it be detested on account of a motive that is common to all grievous sin; for the detestation has virtually no less extension than the motive. But detestation cannot be called universal if there be any sin on the conscience which the detestation fails to embrace either in itself or its motive. Thus a man may have committed two acts of theft, by one of which he robbed a church; if he detest this last as being an offence against justice as well as against religion, his act of detestation embraces the other theft, even though he do not think of it; but if his detestation be no more than sorrow for having committed sacrilege, it is not universal, for it does not in any way extend to the simple theft.

No detestation of sin is helpful to salvation unless it is supernatural, being done under the actual grace of God. This follows from the general doctrine which we have established, that grace is needed for every salutary act. (n. 591.)

756. *Perfect Contrition.* — The Sacrament of Penance is the divinely appointed means of con-

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veying forgiveness of post-baptismal grievous sin to the souls of sinners, and it is the necessary means, as will be shown in its place. (n. 762.) This necessity, however, is not absolute, but it can be replaced if the sinner elicit an act of what is called Perfect Contrition. This Perfect Contrition involves an act of desire of the Sacrament, which desire may be explicit or implicit (n. 631); and the remission of sin that is secured must be ascribed to this desire. The case is therefore parallel to that where original sin is remitted by Baptism received either in fact or in desire. (n. 694.)

This doctrine is partly presupposed and partly expressly proclaimed by the Council of Trent (Sess. 14, cap. 4; Denz. 777, 778), which teaches that although contrition is sometimes perfect and reconciles man to God before the Sacrament is actually received, yet this reconciliation is not to be ascribed to the contrition itself, apart from the desire of the Sacrament which it includes. Baius sought to confine this efficacy of perfect contrition to the case of necessity or of martyrdom, but this doctrine was condemned. (Prop. 71; Denz. 951.) The necessity spoken of is where the sinner has no access to a priest who is competent to administer the Sacrament. The true doctrine is, therefore, that Perfect Contrition avails to reconcile a sinner to God, even when it is possible to receive the Sacrament actually; but the sinner must have the desire of the actual reception, which desire he will not fail to gratify in due time; and if he neglect to do so, grave doubt will arise whether he truly had Perfect Contrition;

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but if he were truly contrite even for an instant, his sin is forgiven, and does not revive, even though he fail to carry out his good purpose. It need hardly be remarked that the impossibility of access to a priest of which we speak may be physical, or it may be moral, arising from ignorance that God has committed this Sacrament to the hands of His priests, or from other causes.

The proof of our doctrine is found in certain texts of Scripture. God loves those that love Him (Proverbs viii. 17); He that loveth Christ shall be loved of the Father (St. John xiv. 21); many sins were remitted to the woman that was a sinner because she loved much (St. Luke vii. 47); if men turn to God, He will turn to them. (Zach. i. 3.) These passages sufficiently show that under the Old Law love sufficed to secure forgiveness of sin, and the coming of Christ and the institution of the Sacrament of Penance cannot be supposed to have increased the difficulty of obtaining pardon for sin; it follows, therefore, that love still may have this effect. All true love certainly includes the desire of complying with the commands of Him who is loved; and this is why Perfect Contrition involves the desire of the Sacrament which God has commanded to be received by all sinners. (n. 762.)

The Perfect Contrition of which we speak is detestation of sin founded on the motive that it is an offence against God, who is loved above all things else. This love is an act of the virtue of charity, and the detestation of sin founded on this motive is in kind the most perfect possible.

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A question may be raised, why it is necessary for a sinner who is already reconciled to God by an act of Perfect Contrition to seek absolution from sin in the Sacrament of Penance. The fundamental reason is that God has so ordained; but we may further remark that when sacramental absolution is given, some acts of satisfaction are enjoined (n. 769), and this satisfaction is due on account of all forgiven sin, whatever may have been the way in which forgiveness was obtained. Moreover, the Sacrament has been instituted as the ordinary means of conveying remission of sin, and Perfect Contrition is in some sense an extraordinary substitute; right order requires that what is extraordinary and purely internal should not be allowed to dispense with the use of the ordinary and external means of attaining the same end. Also, it will commonly be an act of rashness if any one who is conscious of having sinned grievously were to rest his hopes of salvation on his having been able to make an act of contrition. Absolute certainty of forgiveness (n. 639) is not ordinarily attainable, even in that Sacrament which is given to facilitate reconciliation with God: and prudence requires that, in a matter of this moment, use should be made of what is at once the surest and the easiest means of salvation. The Council of Trent requires that one who has sinned should not, unless in case of necessity, receive Holy Communion without previous confession, "however contrite he may think himself." (Sess. 13, can. 11; Denz. 773.)

It must be understood that the Perfect Contrition of which we have been speaking requires an

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act founded on a particular motive, without reference to any particular degree of intensity. St. Alphonsus Liguori asserts as the common teaching of divines, that sorrow for all sin will justify a sinner without the Sacrament, if it proceed from even a low degree of love of God above all things. (*Theol. Moral*, lib. vi. nn. 436, 442.) The essence of the act is that the person should judge God to be good with a goodness which exceeds all goodness that is found in anything else, and should will to love Him for this goodness. The act of the judgment does not admit of degrees, while the act of the will admits them. What is called intensity of love often belongs to the sensitive faculty, and may be present in a higher or lower degree, but the substantial character of the act of the will does not depend upon the degree attained; the sensible faculty will always be more easily moved by what is sensible than by spiritual objects. Christ quoted (St. Matt. xxii. 37) from Deuteronomy (vi. 5) the precept requiring men to love God with their whole heart and with all their strength, but these words are fully satisfied when the judgment sets God above all creatures.

The same considerations show that a good act of Perfect Contrition may be made in an instant: the act of the judgment does not require to be spread over any space of time: pardon is obtained in the very instant that the sinner repents, as St. Thomas teaches (3. p. q. 84. a. 8. ad. 1.), and as we see exemplified in the case of David, whose expression of contrition—I have sinned—was immediately followed by the assurance that the Lord had

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taken away his sin: he should not die, but he must endure the temporal punishment still due to his forgiven sin. (2 Kings xii. 13, 14.)

An act of Perfect Contrition sets value upon God Himself, and not upon His gifts, for these are creatures. But it cannot be proved that that act of love is rendered imperfect because it regards God as being good to him who forms the act; God's gifts are proofs and illustrations of His essential infinite goodness which attracts love. In fact, the Holy Scripture does not propose to our imitation better acts of love than that of the Psalmist, whose soul panted after God as the hart panteth after the fountains of water (Psalm xli. 2); or of St. Paul, who declared that to him, to live was Christ, and to die was gain. (Philipp. i. 21.) Goodness which is considered as overflowing on to others is something higher than that which is confined to the Him that is good. It will be understood that a true love of the creatures of God can coexist in the soul with that love of God above all things which constitutes Perfect Contrition.

757. *Attrition.* — Perfect Contrition is not a necessary condition of the forgiveness of sins in the Sacrament of Penance. This truth is established as the doctrine of the Church by the condemnation passed on a proposition of Baius (58; Denz. 938), which taught that "a sinner is not reconciled to God by the ministry of the priest who gives absolution, but by God alone, the suggestions and inspirations of whose grace raise him to life." The doctrine of Baius would seem to have been that when a

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sinner confesses his sin with sorrow which does not rise to be contrition, the grace of God so influences him in the interval between his confession and the absolution that he becomes contrite, so that the absolution does not effect his reconciliation. This view is opposed to the teaching of Trent, which we shall shortly prove (n. 775), that sometimes priestly absolution is essential to salvation; and it represents the power of the keys (n. 748) as given to the Church for purposes which do not include the remission of sin.

It follows that the Sacrament requires sorrow for sin of some kind which is not necessarily perfect contrition; and to sorrow which is not perfect contrition the name of Attrition is given. The word seems to have been first used by Alan of Lisle, who died in 1203. (*Reg. Theol.* c. 85; *P.L.* 210, 618.) The word Contrition is often used widely to include both Perfect Contrition and Attrition. In both of these there is detestation of sin with the resolve to sin no more; but they differ in the motive of this detestation, for, as we have seen (n. 756), Perfect Contrition is founded on the motive of the love of God: Attrition is sorrow founded on any other supernatural motive. These motives may take various forms, but they are reducible to the consideration of the inherent heinousness of sin or to fear of the punishments with which it is visited by God. These punishments may belong altogether to the supernatural order, as Hell or Purgatory; or they may be such as are in themselves natural, such as sickness or loss of fortune, which how-

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ever will not suffice if they be regarded merely as the results of vicious conduct: they must be regarded expressly as sent by God in punishment of sin.

Attempts have been made to show that fear can never be a laudable motive for detesting sin, and this point was often urged by the Jansenists. They said that one who formed such an act of fear of Hell equivalently said that if there were no Hell he would continue his course of sin. But this objection is not to the purpose. He who fears Hell may in fact detest sin, and he is not concerned to consider what his conduct would be, if God's providence in his regard were other than it is: no one can wisely speculate as to what would be the result of false suppositions on practical matters. Frail man may be thankful that the fear of Hell stands on guard like a sentinel at the door of his heart, to check the attempts of Satan to enter. This illustration is from St. Chrysostom. (Hom. 15, *De Statuis*, n. 1; *P.G.* 49, 153.) The same Holy Spirit which taught the Psalmist to incline his heart to do the justifications of God for ever, for the reward, taught him also to pray that his flesh might be pierced with the fear of God. (Psalm cxviii. 112, 120.)

758. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has given an account of that detestation of sin without which no remission can be hoped for; and it is shown that if this detestation be founded on the motive of the love of God as being good in Himself or good towards men, it suffices to reconcile a sinner to

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the Creator whom he has offended, and that this is so even when the act of love has no prefixed degree of intensity or duration. The nature of that lower sorrow which suffices to render a sinner susceptible of the Sacrament of Penance, is then described.

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CHAPTER III.

CONFESSION.

759. *Subject of the Chapter.*—The second part of the Sacrament of Penance is Confession, which we shall prove to be necessary, by Divine institution, even in the case of grievous sin for which the sinner has obtained forgiveness by an act of Perfect Contrition. We shall also prove against the Jansenists that it is a salutary, but not obligatory, practice to confess venial sins, and obtain absolution for them.

760. *Catholic Doctrine.*—The points of doctrine defined by canons of the Council of Trent on the subject of Confession, are as follows (Sess. 14; Denz. 794—796):

6. Sacramental Confession was ordained by God, and is by Divine law necessary to salvation. It is not true that the method of secret confession to a priest alone, which the Catholic Church has always practised from the beginning and still practises, is foreign to the ordination and precept of Christ, and is a human invention.

7. In the Sacrament of Penance, in order to the remission of sin, it is necessary by Divine law to confess all and every the mortal sins which, after due and diligent preparation, are in the memory,

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and this even if they are hidden sins and forbidden only by the last two precepts of the Decalogue, together with the circumstances that change the species: nor is it true that this Confession is necessary only for instructing and consoling the penitent, or that it was practised of old only with a view to the imposition of canonical satisfaction; or that they who endeavour to confess all their sins wish to leave nothing to the mercy of God; or lastly, that it is not lawful to confess venial sins.

8. Confession of all sin, as practised in the Church, is not impossible, nor is it a human tradition which the pious should put away: each and all the faithful of both sexes are bound to it, once a year, according to the decree of the Council of the Lateran, wherefore it is not right to persuade the faithful not to confess in Lent.

761. *Errors.*—These canons sufficiently indicate the false views on the subject of Sacramental Confession that prevailed among various sections of Protestants. In many Protestant sects, confession of sin is largely encouraged; and especially, candidates for admission to the "Church" (n. 165) or governing body of a congregation are often expected to narrate their "experience," which involves something like a public general confession: the integrity of which confession, however, is probably left to the discretion of the penitent. Confession in some form has probably always been in use in the Established Church of England, ever since its origin, for care was taken by the framers of the formularies to avoid giving too rude a shock to the people:

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the exterior semblance of Catholic practice was to be kept up as far as possible, for the use of such as chose to employ it. The passages from the Book of Common Prayer that bear on the matter will find a more convenient place when we speak of Absolution. (n. 779.)

762. *Confession Obligatory.*—Sacramental Confession of all and singular mortal sins committed after Baptism is of Divine institution and necessary to salvation, according to the canons lately quoted from the Council of Trent. We proceed to prove this doctrine from Holy Scripture and other sources by which revelation is made known.

The proof from Scripture is founded on the two texts of the Gospel which we have already quoted as giving to the Church the power to forgive sin. (n. 748.) There is no need to repeat them. It is impossible that the judicial function thus entrusted to the Church should be performed, unless the minister who is to bind and loose, retain and forgive, know the crimes with which he is to deal: and he cannot know them except by the testimony of the culprit himself, for the guilt of sin depends upon the interior disposition with which the act is committed, and this is known to no one but the sinner. Human tribunals take no account of the interior mind, and look only to the exterior act, as to which they are informed by witnesses. (n. 777.)

It will be observed that the judge of the sacred tribunal may obtain the necessary knowledge from public confession no less than from that which is

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made in private. In fact, it is probable that in some particular times and places, sacramental confession was made in public, although the practice never extended to the whole Church. And there never has been a time when secret confession was not in use: public confession was never employed for all sins indiscriminately.

The chief objection which is brought against this Scripture argument rests on the silence of the sacred writers as to the use of Confession. But this objection has force only on the assumption that the written Word of God contains the whole of revelation; we have shown that this assumption is unproved and false. (nn. 106—108.)

The Scriptural doctrine of the necessity of Confession was recognized in the early Church and reduced to practice, as is fully shown by the passages collected in Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics*. But the argument from prescription which we have often used (n. 665, &c.), applies with peculiar force to the matter now before us. There is no shadow of doubt that the Council of the Lateran of 1215 passed a decree enjoining that all the faithful should confess their sins at least once a year, and that this decree was everywhere recognized as binding. It is altogether incredible that the practice which was regulated by this decree had had no existence previous to its date: no Pope or Council could have induced the people at large to accept a novelty of so burdensome a nature. And the same consideration applies if an attempt be made to fix any earlier date for the introduction of the practice of

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confession or of the doctrine that it is of Divine institution: no power short of that which converted the world could have induced men to submit to an obligation so opposed to natural inclination.

763. *Venial Sin.*—The Jansenists, in pursuance of their purpose of withdrawing men from the use of the means of grace which God has provided, propagated the notion that the Sacrament was rendered contemptible when venial sins were submitted to the keys. (n. 748.) This notion, as expressed by the Synod of Pistoia, is condemned by Pope Pius VI. as rash, pernicious, and contrary to the practice of saints and pious persons, approved by the Council of Trent. (*Auctorem Fidei*, 39; Denz. 1402.) The expression used by the Council of Trent is, that to mention venial sins in confession is right and useful (Sess. 14, cap. 5; Denz. 779); and besides this authoritative statement, the well-known practice of the saints fully proves that such confession is useful. It is not obligatory, but to neglect it, and still more to depreciate it, is certainly a proof of rash confidence in self. The practice is not a modern novelty, as is sometimes imagined. We say nothing of certain passages that may be cited from such early writers as Tertullian and St. Cyprian, concerning which, however, there is room for difference of interpretation: but the teaching of St. Augustine is plain beyond possibility of cavil. "Be constant in going to confession," he says, "you always have something to confess." It is "not easy in this life for so great a change to be wrought in man that there should be nothing in him

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deserving blame." The Saint would not have spoken in this manner concerning grievous sin.

As to the benefit that one who sinned derives from the practice of confession as it is used in the Catholic Church, no one can judge fairly who does not speak from experience; but they who faithfully endeavour to take advantage of the benefit offered them in the Sacrament, find that it secures to them a satisfaction of soul and a freedom in intercourse with God such as is otherwise unattainable. This excellent result is due to the grace that has been secured, but also it is a natural result of the spirit of submission to God's ordinance which is found in him who confesses all his secret faults to a fellow-man; this spirit is not shown by one who uses his own discretion as to whether he shall make a confession, or shall keep silence. A man's confession that he has done wrong is an act of humility, diametrically opposed to the spirit of pride which is found in all sin; he who has set himself up against God repairs the evil by submitting himself to man for God's sake. There is a peculiarly useful element of humiliation in a practice which brings home to all men their equality before God—priest and lay-man, King and subject, master and servant, are all alike in needing confession; Bishops, Cardinals, and the Pope himself (n. 290) acknowledge their sins to a simple priest. It is sometimes said that it cannot be right that confession of sin should be made to one who is himself a sinner, but this remark loses sight of the truth that the minister of the Sacrament acts in the place of Christ. (n. 682.)

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Cases are quite common where two priests are accustomed to confess to each other.

If any one question the beneficial effect of confession, he may be asked to compare the lives of such Catholics as faithfully do their duty in this matter with the lives of other Catholics who neglect the Sacraments.

764. *Recapitulation.* — This short chapter has shown from Scripture and tradition, and especially from prescription, that the divinely appointed ordinary means of obtaining remission of sin necessarily involves the obligation of confession of all grievous sin: also it is proved that the practice of confessing venial sin is useful.

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CHAPTER IV.

SATISFACTION. INDULGENCES.

765. *Subject of the Chapter.*—It remains for us to show that the valid reception of the Sacrament of Penance does not commonly relieve the penitent from the obligation of undergoing some punishment in satisfaction to the justice of God, whom he has offended. We shall find that this punishment must be undergone by him, either in his own person or in the person of another whose satisfactory works are communicated to him. This communication takes place chiefly when an act of virtue is performed to which the Church has attached an Indulgence.

766. *Catholic Doctrine.* — The canons of the Council of Trent, passed in the fourteenth session, which bear upon the matter of this chapter, establish the following points of doctrine (Denz. 800—803):

12. The whole punishment of sin is not always remitted by God along with the guilt, and the satisfaction made by penitents is something different from faith by which they lay hold of the truth that Christ suffered for them.

13. Satisfaction for sin, as regards temporal punishment, is made to God through the merits of Christ by such punishments as are inflicted by Him, and borne with patience, or are enjoined by a

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priest; and by such as are voluntarily undertaken, such as fastings, prayers, alms, or other works of piety; and it is not true that mere newness of life is the best penance.

14. Satisfactions by which penitents redeem their sins through Jesus Christ are acts of worship of God, and are not traditions of men which obscure the doctrine on grace and the true worship of God, and the benefit brought by the Death of Christ.

15. The keys were given to the Church, not for the purpose of absolving only, but also for binding; and therefore, when priests impose penances on those who confess, they do not act against the purpose of the keys, or against the institution of Christ: and it is no fiction that a debt of temporal punishment commonly remains, after that eternal punishment has been remitted in virtue of the keys.

767. *Protestant Practice.*—It seems that no Protestant sect has any doctrine concerning the need of satisfaction for sin, nor systematic practice of enforcing it, except where the sin is public. The authorities in the Established Churches in England and Scotland formerly enforced discipline by excommunication, which was attended by grievous civil effects; but this jurisdiction has been much curtailed, partly by Acts of Parliament, and partly by change in public opinion; it always regarded wrongful acts as crimes rather than as sins, and therefore had nothing in common with the jurisdiction exercised by the Church in the Sacrament of Penance.

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Most sects will occasionally exercise a power of rejecting offending members from participation in the Lord's Supper; but the object is to check scandal, and save all from the imputation of being heedless of evil: there is no thought of forcing the offender to make satisfaction to God for his sin.

768. *Temporal Punishment.* — In proof of the doctrine defined at Trent, that the whole punishment of sin is not always remitted along with its guilt, it is enough to refer to some well-known histories which we read in Holy Scripture. Adam sinned, and was forgiven (n. 502), in view of the merits of the coming Redeemer, but he was warned that a life of trial was before him (Genesis iii. 17), to be closed by that great act of penance, death. (Genesis v. 5.) It was in punishment of forgiven sin that Moses was not allowed to pass the Jordan (Deut. iii. 26, 27; xxxiv. 4); and the same is true of Aaron (Numbers x. 26); we have already had occasion to mention the case of David. (n. 756; 2 Kings xii. 13, 14.) The Christian Church held the same doctrine in the earliest days, as is evident from the history of the controversy concerning the treatment of the lapsed, of which we have given such account as is necessary (n. 476); and the truth is proved by all the expressions where the Fathers contrast the two Sacraments of the Dead (n. 668), Baptism and Penance. (n. 751.) The reason of the difference is found in the consideration that the sins of the baptized are more heinous than the sins of catechumens, as being committed against more light and grace.

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There are some passages of Scripture which extol the fulness of forgiveness that God extends to repentant sinners, and which therefore might seem at first sight to exclude the idea that satisfaction will be exacted; but the apparent difficulty disappears when it is remembered that remission of eternal punishment and restoration to the favour of God are benefits so great, that no amount of temporal punishment is of the smallest account in comparison.

769. *Sacramental Penance.*—The Sacrament of Penance is instituted in the form of a tribunal, in which the candidate for the Sacrament is tried and judged (n. 749); and it belongs to the judge of this tribunal to fix the terms on which the benefit of absolution is to be allowed; in other words, to require the penitent to undertake voluntarily to go through some part of the punishment due to his sin (n. 768), instead of waiting till he is compelled to go through the whole, in far severer form, in Purgatory. (n. 829.) The administration of the Sacrament is one part of the exercise of the power of the keys which is given to the Church (n. 748), and a key serves for closing no less than for opening; the power of opening is exercised when the duly disposed penitent is absolved; by the power of closing, the priest refuses to absolve those whom he judges not to be duly disposed, and by the same power he imposes the sacramental penance which is to be "salutary and convenient according to the quality of the sins and the powers of the penitent." (Conc. Trid. Sess. 14, cap. 8; Denz. 783.)

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This doctrine is the basis of the practice of the Church, and it was never questioned till the sixteenth century. The Lutheran doctrine concerning Justification (n. 627) afforded an excuse for escaping from any practice so distasteful to nature as that which the Catholic Church required.

For many centuries it has been the constant practice of the Church, both in East and West, to admit sinners to Holy Communion as soon as they have confessed their sins and obtained absolution, even before they had actually performed their sacramental penance. It seems that the stricter practice of requiring satisfaction before admittance to Communion was at one time common as an occasional expedient for testing the sincerity and perseverance of the penitent; but it was never supposed that the nature of the Sacrament required satisfaction before absolution. Absolution was freely granted, before satisfaction had been made, as often as any necessity arose, such as the approach of death or a threatened outbreak of persecution; so that plainly the matter was supposed to be a point of variable discipline. The present practice of granting prompt absolution had been in use for many centuries when its lawfulness was denied by Peter of Osma. This new doctrine was condemned, along with many other opinions put forward by the same writer, by Pope Sixtus IV., in 1479. (Denz. 614.)

Nevertheless, the Jansenists adopted the error of Peter, and several expressions of their views were condemned by the Holy See (Denz. 1173, 1302, 1398), which thereby removed one of the obstacles

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put by the heretics in the way of approach to that fountain of graces, the Holy Eucharist.

We learn from the Council of Trent (Sess. 14, can. 13, n. 766) that satisfaction for sin may be made by any works of piety, among which prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds are specially mentioned. It belongs to Moral Theology to indicate the principles by which the discretion of confessors should be guided in the assignment of penances. The practice on this subject has varied very much in different ages of the Church.

770. *Public Penances.*—Sacramental Penance is always so far secret, that although it may be known that the good work has been done, yet nothing shows that it was enjoined in the Sacrament, unless the penitent choose to disclose the truth. Nevertheless we read that, in certain times and places, public penance had a large place in the discipline of the Church. A great amount of labour has been spent in collecting and discussing the scattered references to this matter which are found in the remains of antiquity, and very various conclusions were drawn by the writers who took part in the Jansenist controversy. The rebellion of the sect against living authority showed itself in the attempt to revive what was called primitive severity. It is altogether beyond our scope to attempt to go into this very intricate history, and we must confine ourselves to a few points which may be considered well established. The difficulty of ascertaining the truth arises from the tendency of many writers to describe the practices of which they had read as

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though they were actually existing, although they might have been obsolete for centuries, and perhaps in fact never existed except in the brain of some zealous Bishop. Thus, in the seventh and eighth centuries many "penitential books" were drawn up and published under the names of eminent prelates, and an incautious reader might suppose that they represented what actually prevailed among the Franks and English. These books enumerate a great variety of sins and assign to each a long period of penance: seven years is not uncommonly mentioned. During this time the penitent is not merely deprived of spiritual privileges, such as Holy Communion, but he is to live the life of a pilgrim, never sleeping two nights in the same place except on great festivals, and fasting on bread and water, never taking wine or mead. This is what we read in perhaps the best known of these books, which goes under the name of St. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury. But there is no reason to think that the discipline represented by this book ever had any real existence, for although it professes to be of English origin, it notes that public penance was never in use in England. (i. 13, 4; Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, iii. 187.) Some light is thrown on what is meant by the length of time that penance was to last, when we find St. Peter Damian treating it as familiarly known that one year of penance meant three thousand stripes. (*De Vita Eremitica*, c. 8; *P.L.* 145, 757.) This Saint lived in the north of Italy about the year 1000.

There can be no doubt that in early times,

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certain public sins were punished by total or partial exclusion from the Offices of the Church for a longer or shorter time: and it seems to have been a common act of devotion for the position of penitents to be voluntarily assumed even by persons who had not been known to commit grave sin. These volunteers were of course at liberty to resume ordinary life whenever they pleased, and many went no further than to submit to the initiatory ceremony, when ashes were placed upon their head. We thus see the origin of the peculiar rite which still characterizes the first day of the Lenten fast, and gives it the name of Ash Wednesday.

The public penance of which we have been speaking was totally distinct from sacramental penance enjoined by confessors. It was never inflicted on the higher ranks of the clergy, nor on women or infirm persons: nor did any one go through it a second time. The superintendence of this discipline belonged to the Bishop; we have the express testimony of St. Augustine that no one could be put to penance unless on his own open confession or after trial and conviction. (Serm. 351 [50], 4, 10.)

771. *Indulgences.*—The subject of Public Penance, however interesting, does not belong properly to dogma, but to Church History. It has, however, been necessary to say a few words regarding it, because the language in which the Church is accustomed to describe Indulgences which she sees fit to grant, is derived from the ancient penitential discipline. We proceed to set forth the

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teaching of the Church on the subject of these Indulgences.

The falsehood is so constantly repeated that an Indulgence is a license to commit future sin, that it is necessary to say at the outset that to grant such a license is beyond the power of the holy God Himself. Indulgences refer exclusively to the consequences of past sin, and are of avail to those only who have sorrow for their sin, with the purpose of not sinning again.

The defined faith of the Church as to Indulgences goes no further than the two points, that the Church has power to grant Indulgences and that the use of them is salutary to the Christian people (Trent. Sess. 25; Denz. 862); but the consentient teaching of theologians tells us with certainty something more as to their nature. Thus we know that the Church possesses what is called a treasury, in which are stored the satisfactory merit of the works of Christ and of His saints; and that the treasure can be distributed among the faithful by the Roman Pontiff and others who exercise authority under him. The treasure so distributed avails for the remission of temporal punishment due to sin, including both that which may be inflicted by the Church in exercise of her penitential discipline, and that which is due to the Divine Justice. Such a distribution is called an Indulgence, and it may be applied by way of suffrage for the benefit of the holy souls in Purgatory. We proceed to explain and justify this statement.

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It will not be questioned that the satisfactory value of the works of Christ was infinite, for the Person who wrought them was God, and He offered them for all the needs of men. His merits are constantly applied to the souls of men, and remain unexhausted. These merits then fill the treasury to overflowing, and if the satisfactions of the sinless Mother of God and of other innocent and penitent saints are admitted to have a place there, the reason is that they may not be wasted; not that they are needed. Some at least of the saints have gained satisfactory merit beyond their needs, and these would remain unused if they did not avail for other men.

Further, it is unquestionable that these superabundant merits admit, by God's mercy, of being communicated. As regards the merits of Christ, this communication takes place as often as the Sacraments are worthily received; and that the same is true of the merits of holy men follows from the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, as we shall see. (n. 841.) We read in Holy Scripture of many cases where the merits of one person had power to turn aside the wrath of God provoked by the evil deeds of another: thus Sodom would have been spared for the sake of a few just men, had such been found among the inhabitants (Genesis xviii. 26); and the Psalmist was familiar with this feature of the merciful providence of God. (Psalm cxxxi.) The sin of one member of a community brings temporal misfortune upon the rest (Josue vii. &c.), and God is not less ready to show mercy than

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to punish. A story told by Eusebius (*H.E.* 3, 23; *P.G.* 20, 262) shows us that St. John the Apostle believed in the power of his own satisfactions to profit one of his fellow-men.

The right of the Church to distribute this treasure is included in the power of the keys granted to St. Peter (St. Matt. xvi. 19), for the door of the Kingdom of Heaven is not opened unless everything is removed which hinders entry; and the power that is competent to remove the guilt of grievous sin, which is the main obstacle, cannot but avail to remove the far slighter hindrance resulting from a debt of temporal punishment. We see this power of the Church exercised in the third century, as often as the intercession of confessors of Christ was accepted on behalf of the lapsed. (n. 746.) St. Cyprian discusses the effect of these intercessions at length, and it is clear that he regarded the Indulgence granted by the Church as valid before God as well as before the human tribunal. (Epist. 10, *Ad Martyr.; P.L.* 4, 253—256.)

That Indulgences granted at the present day avail before God is implied in the declaration of which we have quoted from the Council of Trent, that the use of them is salutary to the Christian people. If their effect was merely to remit some portion of public, canonical penance, they would not be salutary but useless, for these public penances have long been obsolete; besides which, their effect would be to deprive a sinner of a comparatively easy opportunity of making satisfaction, and leave him exposed to the far greater pains of Purgatory.

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(n. 829.) As to what precisely is the effect of an Indulgence we are not further informed than that it mitigates in some degree the suffering to be undergone in Purgatory by the person to whom it is applied, whether he be living or dead at the time of the application. A Plenary Indulgence releases from all this suffering, so far as the person is capable of receiving this mitigation, according to the unknown laws of God's providence in this matter: the effect of Partial Indulgences is in some way proportioned to the effect which would have been secured by a certain amount of canonical penance. When Indulgences are offered on behalf of those who have already passed out of this life, there is no absolute assurance that they benefit those particular persons, for it cannot be shown that God is bound to accept the offering; still less can we be assured as to the extent of benefit that is communicated. It is well to remember the teaching of St. Augustine: "All suffrages offered for the dead profit those who while on earth lived so as to deserve to be profited: it is in this life that men earn the favour of being relieved from pain in the next life." (*Enchir.* 110; *P.L.* 40, 283.)

We sometimes hear of abuses alleged to be found in the mode in which the power of granting Indulgences is exercised. If any such abuses have ever existed, they are attributable to the human agents through whom the Church acts. They do not affect the doctrine.

While we know that the use of Indulgences is salutary, nothing is known in detail as to their effect.

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It is altogether a mistake to suppose that an Indulgence of so many years implies the remission of this number of years of imprisonment in Purgatory. The Church expresses herself in language taken from the old legislation concerning public penance. (n. 770.) We are altogether ignorant of the duration of the cleansing process in the other life. (n. 829.)

772. *Recapitulation.*—In this chapter, we have proved that ordinarily some debt of temporal punishment remains due for sin, the guilt of which has been forgiven. This debt is partly discharged by the works of piety which the minister of the Sacrament of Penance imposes on the penitent, and which he is bound to perform: in former times, the same debt was partly discharged by the public penances which were then in use, and the Church has always used and still uses the power of relaxing part by granting Indulgences.

The chapter should be read in conjunction with what is said hereafter on Purgatory. (n. 829.)

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CHAPTER V.

REQUISITES OF THE SACRAMENT.

773. *Subject of the Chapter.*—Having spoken of Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction, which are acts of the applicant for the Sacrament of Penance, we have now to speak of the part taken by the Minister. His work is to complete the Sacrament by pronouncing the Absolution. We shall consider the nature of this act, and afterwards explain what are the necessary qualifications of the Minister, and his duties: among these, a principal place is held by the law of secrecy, which is called the Seal of Confession.

The reader who knows the Catholic doctrine on the subject of this Sacrament will see with interest some extracts from the Book of Common Prayer of the Established Church of England, bearing upon confession of sin. (n. 779.)

774. *Matter of the Sacrament.*—It is certain that Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction, in the sense explained (nn. 753—769), are parts of the Sacrament of Penance, which is completed by the priest's absolution; but there is some difference of opinion as to whether these three acts of the penitent are to be called the matter of the Sacra-

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ment. It has sometimes been said that the post-baptismal sins of the penitent are the matter of Penance, and it is true that they are the thing with which the Sacrament is concerned, but they are no more its matter than original sin and pre-baptismal sin are the matter of Baptism. Scotus taught that the absolution of the priest, so far as it is something external, is the matter, and so far as it signifies the effect of the Sacrament, it is the form: he held that the acts of the penitent were nothing but indispensable conditions. But the commoner view is that which represents the three acts as having the place of the matter, and in fact the point is almost settled by the words of the Catechism of the Council of Trent. This Catechism was drawn up after the close of the Council, as a compendium of doctrine to guide the parish clergy in their work of instructing their people; and its authority on dogmatic matters stands very high, although its language is not absolutely conclusive. The Catechism contains the following remarks upon the subject before us: This Sacrament differs from the others chiefly in this, that while in the other Sacraments the matter is some natural or artificial thing, in Penance the acts of the penitent are, as it were, the matter. The reason why the Catechism declares that they are "as it were" the matter is not that they are not truly the matter; but that they are not things of the kind that can be used externally, like water in Baptism, and chrism in Confirmation. This authoritative declaration as to the meaning of the Council

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(Sess. 14, canon 4; Denz. n. 745) seems to most theologians to settle the question.

In speaking of confessions it is usual to distinguish between "necessary matter" and "free matter:" "necessary matter," which consists of all post-baptismal grievous sin of which the penitent is conscious and which has not yet been submitted to the keys. All other post-baptismal sin is "free matter." This distinction does not touch what is necessary for the validity of the Sacrament, but it concerns the penitent. If the penitent has "necessary matter" in the sense explained, he is bound to confess it: as to what is not necessary matter, he is free to choose whether he will accuse himself or no; only, if he wishes to receive the Sacrament, he must confess some sin for which he is contrite or at least attrite. (nn. 756, 757.) There is a possible case in which a difficulty arises, where a penitent in good faith omits from his confession one grievous sin which he has inculpably forgotten, and accuses himself only of another grievous sin of a different nature, for which he has attrition founded on some supernatural motive which is not applicable to the forgotten sin. (n. 755.) If this happen, theologians differ as to the spiritual condition of the penitent, supposing an absolution has been pronounced: he has been guilty of grievous sin for which he feels no sorrow, and yet he believes in good faith that he has received the Sacrament validly. We cannot undertake to decide the question, and will only observe that the power and mercy of God can be safely trusted. All difficulty is avoided if

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the attrition is based on some comprehensive motive.

775. *Form of the Sacrament.*—It is agreed by all that the form of the Sacrament of Penance is found in the words of absolution which are pronounced by the priest as often as he judges that the penitent has supplied the necessary matter by contrite confession and acceptance of penance. This absolution is in the nature of a sentence pronounced by a judge, and must be uttered by word of mouth, for such is the practice of the Church, from which the judge derives his authority to deal with the case. In Penance, as in the other Sacraments, the matter and form must be so united as to form morally one act (n. 680); and this is the reason why Pope Clement VIII., in 1602, declared that it was not lawful either to make sacramental confession or to send absolution by letter. (Denz. 962.) This decree does not prevent the substance of the confession being put in writing and shown to the confessor; but the accusation should be made by word of mouth. It should be made with a view to absolution, so as to be self-accusation, not a mere historical narration.

The essential words of the form as now exclusively used in the Western Church are an assertion: I absolve thee from thy sins. The form employed in the East is a prayer—May God absolve thee; and the same practice prevailed for many centuries in the West. The precatory form has therefore undoubtedly been valid, and the like is always employed in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction:

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whether it would now be valid in the West for Penance is doubtful, for the reason that we mentioned just now when pointing out the ground of the necessity that the absolution should be given by spoken words.

776. *Who can be Minister?*—The Council of Trent has three canons concerning the qualifications needed in a minister of the Sacrament of Penance. (Sess. 14; Denz. 797—799.) They establish the following points of doctrine:

9. The absolution given by a priest is a judicial act, not a bare ministry of pronouncing and declaring that the sins of him who makes confession are already remitted, if only he believe that he has been absolved, and this even though the priest absolve, not seriously but in joke: confession by the penitent is needed, that the priest may be able to absolve him.

10. It is untrue that priests who are in mortal sin have no power to bind or loose: priests alone can give absolution, and the words of Christ concerning binding and loosing, remitting and retaining sin, were not spoken to all the faithful; nor do these words give to every one the power of absolving from sin; to wit, from public sins, by reproof only, provided he who is reproved yield thereto, and from secret sins by voluntary confession.

11. Bishops have the right of reserving cases to themselves, and this not only with a view to external government: reservation therefore restrains the priest from giving a true absolution from the reserved sins.

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These canons were directed against various forms of the views current among the Reformers, all of which were based upon the doctrine that belief in the redemption wrought by Christ sufficed for justification (nn. 627, 628), and therefore for the remission, or rather non-imputation, of sin. In all these systems, the Sacrament of Penance had no place; and the absolution was replaced by an assurance that pardon was already granted. (n. 639.) It is obvious that this assurance might be given by any man, Christian or heathen, and there was no need for the intervention of a priest.

The Catholic Sacrament is something totally different: it is a judicial act, and the judge cannot act unless he has received authority. The constant tradition and practice of the Church shows that this authority, given originally to the Apostles, has been communicated to none but priests. See Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics*.

It need not be questioned that, when no priest is at hand, it may be a useful act of humility for a dying sinner to make avowal of his guilt even to a layman: but such confession cannot have anything of a sacramental character. Nor can it ever be obligatory. The contrary has sometimes been maintained on the ground that every one is bound to do all he can to secure his salvation: but this reason seems to have no force except in the possible case where the sinner sees reason to believe that avowal of his sins is the necessary means of rousing him to make an act of perfect contrition. (n. 756.)

A judge, however competent in other respects,

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has no authority to try any particular cause unless he has been appointed for the purpose by the superior of the parties; and if this principle be applied to the Sacrament of Penance we see that the priestly character does not of itself entitle a person to absolve any penitent: each priest must have received jurisdiction for the purpose from the Church. There are certain priestly offices the holder of which has some jurisdiction in virtue of his office; such jurisdiction is called ordinary. But more commonly the jurisdiction is held by delegation from the Bishop or other authority. Jurisdiction given in that way may be limited, so as not to extend to certain sins; and then the confessor has no power over these *reserved cases* as they are called. No sins can be reserved that are not grievous and in some way external: there is great variety of practice as to the reservation of sins, the discretion of the Bishops being exercised according to the varying circumstances of each diocese.

Moreover, the Church grants to all priests the needful jurisdiction to enable them to absolve penitents who are at the point of death. It is to be observed that this power extends to all men who have the priestly character in their souls, including not only such as are schismatics or heretics, but also to those who have been degraded from the dignity and privileges of the priestly state. (n. 302.)

777. *The Two Tribunals.*—It will be convenient to point out shortly the differences that are found between the action of ordinary criminal courts, called the external forum, and that of the internal

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forum which is the sacramental tribunal of Penance. In both cases we find a judge and a culprit. In the external forum, the judge will usually have assistance from assessors, jurymen, or the like: there is an accuser; there are advocates and witnesses on both sides; and force is at hand to carry out the sentence, if necessary. The proceedings are usually public. In the internal forum the judge sits alone: the person whose case is being tried is himself not culprit only, but also accuser and sole witness, whose testimony is the last word both in his own favour and against him: the proceedings are private, and when all is over the judge is bound to the strictest secrecy; and the sentence of the judge is not such as calls for the use of force.

778. *The Seal of Confession.*—The obligation of secrecy which is upon the minister of the Sacrament of Penance is called the Seal of Confession. It arises from natural law, for every one who confides secrets to another has a right to have his confidence respected. It is also required by the Divine law, for when God instituted the Sacrament under the form of a secret trial, He by implication required the minister who holds His place to do nothing which would frustrate the purpose of this secrecy; and these natural and Divine obligations are enforced by the canon law of the Church. The obligation is absolute, admitting of no exception whatever. The seal binds the priest and all other persons to whose knowledge the confession has come, such as interpreters, or if ever it should chance that any one overheard what was said; and it extends not only

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to sins, but also to whatever else has become known in confession made in order to absolution, the revelation of which would in any way annoy the penitent.

The penitent himself is not under any obligation of secrecy, but if he be wise he will always observe it.

779. *The Book of Common Prayer.*—The Book of Common Prayer is the authorized collection of prayers to be used and rubrics to be observed in the performance of the religious rites of the Established Church of England; and the ministers of this Church are bound by their law to use the book. The authoritative books employed in the offshoots of the English Establishment (n. 252) are substantially the same, though small modifications have often been introduced.

Three forms of confession of sin are authorized by the Book, and each is followed by a form of absolution. A remarkable gradation is observable among these forms, which are suited to the occasions on which they are to be used.

The general confession which occurs in the ordinary Morning and Evening Prayer, is couched in terms which specify nothing: "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us." This is followed by what is called the "Absolution, or Remission of sins," by which the people are told that God "pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel."

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In the Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, those who are minded to receive the Holy Communion make a general confession of their manifold sins and wickedness which they from time to time most grievously have committed by thought, word, and deed; the terms used being stronger than those employed in the Morning Prayer, but not descending to details; when this has been said, the Priest pronounces an Absolution, in the form of a prayer, asking God to have mercy upon the people, to pardon and deliver them from all their sins, to confirm and strengthen them in all goodness, and bring them to everlasting life.

It will be observed that this "Absolution," unlike the former, is in the precatory form which was once in use throughout the Church, and is still employed in the East. (n. 775.) It might therefore be valid if pronounced by a true priest, holding jurisdiction, in the case of persons who had made specific confession of all their sins (n. 760), with sorrow and purpose of amendment. But it was felt by the compilers of the Book that this general confession might not suffice for the spiritual needs of all who wished to receive the Communion, and the minister is bidden to offer something more to those that need it. He exhorts all intending communicants to prepare themselves by self-examination, and sorrow for sin, with purpose to sin no more and to make restitution if any be due; and then goes on: "And because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy and with a quiet conscience; therefore, if

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there be any of you who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

There is nothing in the Book to throw light on the nature and effects of the Absolution here spoken of, except what may be gathered from the third form, which we proceed to transcribe. It occurs in the service for the Visitation of the Sick. The sick person is to be "moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort: Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The teaching of the Thirty-Nine Articles on the subject of Penance has been given already (nn. 664, 747); and the authoritative documents of the Establishment contain nothing else which bears upon the subject, except a canon binding on the clergy which insists on the general law of secrecy of confession, but indicates the cases where it is

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permissible, if not obligatory, to violate the seal. (canon 113.) The ministers of other Protestant bodies appear to exercise a discretion as to secrecy, and have sometimes been known even to give information to the police concerning crimes of which a sinner has confessed himself guilty; but they have no written law upon the matter.

780. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has explained the doctrine of the Church as to the matter and form of the Sacrament of Penance, and as to the qualifications of the minister, and his duties. The Book of Common Prayer is quoted to show the light in which the English Establishment looks upon the subject of forgiveness of post-baptismal sin.

781. *Close of the Treatise.*—This long and most important Treatise has set forth and defended the teaching of the Church on the nature, conditions, and effects of the Sacrament which is the appointed means of conveying forgiveness to the souls of such as sin grievously after Baptism. Among the divinely appointed conditions is one which is so repugnant to the pride of man that every endeavour is made by heretics to escape from it; but as a matter of theology, there is little room for controversy concerning it; many difficult historical questions arise, but these must be left to the historians who treat of the dogma and practice of the Church.

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Treatise the Twentieth.

Extreme Unction.

782. *Plan of the Treatise.*—The Sacraments of which we have treated so far, are commonly received by all Catholics, either once only or as often as required, according to the nature of the Sacrament. (n. 471.) The same is true of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, which is not confined to any particular class of persons, but is received by all whenever danger of death is judged to be present. (n. 786.) On this account it is usual to treat of this last Anointing in the fifth place, reserving to the last the consideration of Orders and Matrimony, which Sacraments are confined to comparatively few persons.

We shall speak in a single chapter of the existence, requisites, and effects of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

783. *Nature of the Sacrament.*—Extreme Unction, or Last Anointing, as it may be called, is a Sacrament of the New Law, which is administered to the sick by a priest, who anoints them with blessed oil, with the effect of gaining for them health of soul and body.

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The Council of Trent (Sess. 14; Denz. 804—807) has defined the doctrine of the Church concerning this Sacrament in four canons, which embody the following teaching:

1. Extreme Unction is truly and properly a Sacrament instituted by Christ our Lord, and promulgated by the blessed Apostle James; it is no human invention.

2. The holy Anointing of the sick confers grace, remits sin, and raises up the sick man, if this be expedient for his salvation; and the grace of healing has not ceased.

3. The rite and practice of Extreme Unction observed by the holy Roman Church, is not opposed to the meaning of the blessed Apostle James, nor ought it to be changed, and it cannot without sin be despised by Christians.

4. The presbyters of the Church whom the blessed James requires to be called in to anoint the sick, are priests ordained by a Bishop, and not simply the more aged members of the community; wherefore a priest is alone the proper minister of Extreme Unction.

In these canons, reference is made to two verses of the Catholic Epistle of St. James (v. 14, 15): "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him."

784. *Errors.*—Luther was at one time inclined

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to allow a ceremonial anointing of the sick, though he denied that this was a Sacrament. Afterwards he rejected it altogether, and has been followed by almost all the sects that sprang from the movement which he began. Perhaps the only sect that pays any attention to the teaching of St. James are those who call themselves the Peculiar People, as if the phrase used by St. Peter (1 St. Peter ii. 9) of all Christians belonged in some special sense to them. The officials of this sect, called Elders, use anointing of the sick, with prayer, and their practice attracts attention because they supplement the teaching of St. James with a further doctrine of their own, that it is unlawful to call in the aid of physicians; anointing with prayer is the only medical treatment they allow. This interpretation of the text makes an arbitrary addition to the words, for which there is no foundation in tradition; and it is against all the analogy of Christian teaching to think that the use of supernatural means excuses from the use of the natural. No Catholic would be advised to trust to Extreme Unction and neglect drugs; we must work as if all depended on work, at the same time that we pray as if all depended on prayer.

785. *The True Sacrament.*—That Extreme Unction is a true Sacrament is proved conclusively by the argument from prescription which we have already developed (n. 665) and need not repeat. Further, the words of St. James are so plain as to suffice; the anointing with oil is the sign of the grace of healing which goes along with it, and is therefore a sacramental rite. To receive this anointing is a

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privilege of the sick alone, and therefore we cannot admit the suggestion that the text refers to some rite of reconciling public penitents. Another suggestion makes the text recommend confidence in the graces of healing, of which St. Paul speaks (1 Cor. xii. 28), as being found among Christian believers; but these graces were plainly extraordinary and miraculous, whereas St. James clearly speaks of something which was a part of God's ordinary providence.

References to the practice of anointing the sick with blessed oil are found in the Fathers, from Origen (Hom. ii. in Levit. n. 4; *P.G.* 12, 418) downwards. They clearly distinguish this practice from the Sacrament of Penance, by referring to the text of St. James and by denying the benefit to penitents who are in good health; and St. Innocent I. expressly says that no one who is undergoing public penance can be anointed, and he gives the reason, "because the anointing is a sort of Sacrament, and those who are not allowed to receive the other Sacraments cannot be admitted to this one." (Epist. 25, *Ad Decentium*, c. 8, n. 11; *P.L.* 20, 561.) This passage is important, not so much because of the use of the word Sacrament, as for the clear distinction that it draws between the Anointing and Penance. Other early testimonies from St. Chrysostom and others will be found in Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics*.

786. *The Requisites of the Sacrament.*—The matter of this Sacrament is olive-oil blessed by a Bishop, with which the sick person is anointed on various

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parts of the body, and especially on the organs of the five senses; and the form is the prayer by which the minister asks that by this holy unction and His own abundant mercy the Lord may pardon whatever sin has been committed by the use of that sense.

It seems that blessing by a Bishop is not absolutely required by the Divine institution of the Sacrament, for, in the East, the oil of the sick is blessed by simple priests, and this usage has been approved by the Holy See. But for the West, Pope Paul V. in 1615 condemned as rash and approaching to error the proposition that Extreme Unction can be validly administered with oil which has not received the blessing of a Bishop; and in 1842, Pope Gregory XVI. recognized this condemnation. It would seem that a Bishop can give this blessing of his own power, but that a simple priest cannot do so without the delegation, express or tacit, of the Holy See. (See Benedict XIV. *De Synod.* 8. 1.)

The form now in use is couched in language of prayer, but the indicative mood was formerly in use, and was then undoubtedly valid.

The subject of the Sacrament is a baptized person who has sinned, and who is sick of a disease which is prudently judged likely to result in death. It is not a right practice to delay its administration until death is close at hand, and the fear of terrifying the sick person by early provision for the worst is shown by experience to be illusory; a Christian is not terrified by the means of grace which God has given him. The Sacrament can be received once only in the same danger; but if the

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danger pass away and recur, the Anointing may be repeated again and again.

The practice of the Church shows that the minister of Extreme Unction must be a priest. The word used by St. James is in itself ambiguous, for it literally means "elder" (πρεσβύτερος), while it is the etymological origin of "priest." Tradition sufficiently proves that it means "priest" in the proper sense.

The chief effects of the Sacrament are increase of habitual grace; actual grace to withstand the difficulties and temptations which are apt to abound at the hour of death: forgiveness of sin, if the subject being at least attrite receives the Sacrament in the innocent but incorrect belief that he is in the state of grace. (n. 668.) The Anointing also removes the remnants of sin, it gives courage to face the impending trial; and it often restores health to the body. It is to be observed that God does not ordinarily work obvious miracles of healing when the Sacrament is administered; and therefore the healing effect is not seen in cases where the rites of the Church have through any cause been delayed till death is imminent; and the remarks already made (n. 609) concerning prayer for favours of the natural order apply to the effect of the Sacrament.

The words of St. James are not understood as conveying a precept, and therefore the sick man who refuses the Sacrament when proffered does not sin by disobedience; but to deprive himself of so great an advantage is scarcely consistent with prudence and well-ordered love of self.

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Treatise the Twenty-First.

The Sacrament of Order.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRUE SACRAMENT.

787. *Plan of the Treatise.*—Having treated of the five Sacraments which are intended for the use of all men, we now come to two which give the grace needed for particular states of life: the government and service of the Church, and the married state. Men are set apart and fitted for the work belonging to the ministers of the Church by the Divine Sacrament of Order, and by certain rites of ecclesiastical institution which serve as an introduction to Sacred Orders; and this Sacrament, because of its dignity, must be treated before we speak of the remaining Sacrament of Matrimony, which sanctifies the union of man and wife.

We shall find that the one Sacrament of Order is not received in equal fulness by all the ministers of the Church, but that they form an organized body in which there are several distinct grades.

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This body is called the Hierarchy, concerning which the particulars will be given in our second chapter. The first chapter will be devoted to general matter, appertaining to all ranks in the Hierarchy.

788. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In this chapter we shall show that the Divine institution of the Church is such that a marked distinction exists between those men who are simple members of that body and such as hold, or are capable of holding office, and taking part in the work of conveying the means of salvation to their fellow-Christians. We shall then go on to show that a true Sacrament of the Gospel has been provided for the use of the ministers of the Church, and we shall speak of its requisites and effects. But first we shall state the Catholic doctrine and the opposing views.

789. *The Catholic Doctrine.*—In the case of the Sacraments hitherto treated it has been sufficient to take the Catholic doctrine from the Council of Trent, without referring to earlier definitions of the same truths. But a peculiar difficulty connected with the Sacrament of Order arises from a decree put forth in 1439 by Pope Eugenius IV. in the Council of Florence. We therefore give the relevant part of the decree in this place; its effect will be discussed hereafter. (n. 795.)

Decree for the Armenians. (Denz. 596.)—The sixth Sacrament is Order, the matter of which is that thing by the delivery of which the Order is conferred, as the Priesthood is given by handing the chalice with wine and the paten with bread. The Diaconate by giving the Book of the Gospels. The

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Subdiaconate by delivery of the empty chalice with the empty paten placed upon it; and in like manner for the rest by assigning the things that belong to the ministry of each. The form of the priesthood is as follows: Take the power of offering Sacrifice in the Church for the living and the dead, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. The forms for receiving the other Orders are contained at length in the Roman Pontifical. The ordinary minister of this Sacrament is a Bishop. Its effect, increase of grace, that the recipient may be fit to exercise his ministry.

Eight canons concerning the Sacrament of Order were adopted in the twenty-third session of the Council of Trent in 1563. Five of these concern the matter of the present chapter (Denz. 838—842); the remaining three have their place in that which follows. The several points of doctrine established are these:

1. In the New Testament, there is a visible and external priesthood, and the power of consecrating and offering the true Body and Blood of the Lord, and of remitting and retaining sins; and not an office only and bare ministry of preaching the Gospel, so that those who do not preach may still be priests.

2. Besides the priesthood there are in the Catholic Church other Orders, greater and less, by which, as by so many steps, the priesthood is approached.

3. Order, or Holy Ordination, is truly and properly a Sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord, and it is not a human figment invented by men who

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knew little of the practice of the Church; it is not merely a rite used in choosing ministers of the Word of God and of the Sacraments.

4. By Sacred Ordination the Holy Spirit is given, and it is not in vain that the Bishops say, "Receive the Holy Ghost;" by it a character is impressed, and he who has once been a priest cannot again become a layman.

5. The Sacred Anointing which the Church uses in Sacred Ordination is required and is not contemptible and harmful: so too of the other ceremonies of Order.

790. *Errors.*—The decrees of Trent which have just been read point to the fundamental difference of view concerning the nature of Christian worship between the Catholic Church and the religious bodies that took their rise at the time of the Reformation. We learn that by ordination a Catholic priest receives in his soul an indelible character, and is empowered to offer the Christian Sacrifice; and the rite by which this is conferred is truly and properly a Sacrament. The leading idea of Luther and his followers may be said to have been the denial of the Christian priesthood, in the proper sense of the word (n. 728), which implies the offering of Sacrifice; the word was sometimes retained, but merely in condescension to the prejudices of the people; a new meaning was given to it.

We have already said (nn. 201, 251) that many Protestant sects reject the episcopal form of Church government, and with it all semblance of a Sacrament of Order. In these unprelatic (n. 251) bodies,

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a person becomes a minister as often as he finds a body of worshippers ready to accept his ministrations; this "call" by the people being regarded as the essential for a lawful ministry. The person thus called to take charge of a congregation is accepted by the neighbouring ministers of the same sect as one of themselves, and often a "recognition service" is held, of a more or less solemn character, when hands are laid on the new minister, or the right hand of fellowship is extended to him. This account applies with much variety of detail to the "call" of ministers among the Presbyterian (n. 201) and Independent bodies; there is no pretence that the ceremonies in use confer grace, or that one who is once a minister is always a minister.

The Prelatic bodies (n. 252) are in general agreement with the English Established Church, the mind of which concerning the matter before us is expressed in two of the Articles of Religion. They run as follows:

23. "It is not lawful for any man to take upon himself the office of public preaching or ministering the Sacraments in the congregation before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent which be chosen and called to the work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard."

36. "The Book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops and ordering of Priests and Deacons lately set forth in the time of Edward VI. and con-

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firmed at the same time by authority of Parliament, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither hath it anything that of itself is superstitious and ungodly. And therefore, whosoever are consecrated and ordered according to the Rites of that Book, since the second year of the aforesaid King Edward unto this time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same rites, we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered."

It will be observed that in this case, as in so many others, the formularies of the Established Church admit of many interpretations. For instance, the condition of lawful preaching and ministering the Sacraments is a lawful call given by men who have public authority to give it; but we are left in the dark as to who these men are, and as to the source of their authority. It may be that they are Bishops, receiving their authority from the Church, and this, as far as it goes, is the Catholic doctrine; or it may be that they are the civil governors of the State, which view came to be called Erastian from the name of a Dutch divine of the sixteenth century, who maintained that the Church was no more than a department of the State: or the Article may mean that the men who give the call receive authority to do so from a particular congregation, as the Independents hold; or from a body which represents all the congregations of a district, according to the Presbyterian theory.

We shall have more to say hereafter as to the thirty-sixth Article. (n. 796.) It is enough at present

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to remark that the ordination forms contained in the Book set forth and confirmed by authority of Parliament in 1549 are of the most meagre description. They were in use for more than a hundred years; but at the time of the restoration of Charles II., a strong reaction set in against the unprelatic views that had prevailed during the Rebellion, and several changes were introduced, giving some more definiteness to the colourless expressions of King Edward's Book.

791. *The Clergy.*—We have already shown (n. 202) that by Divine institution there is in the Church a sharp division between the governors and the governed, and it is needless to repeat the proofs; but it may be well to quote the words in which Tertullian condemns the irregular practices of the heretics of his time (*De Præscript.* c. 4; *P.L.* 2, 56): "Their ordinations," he says, "are marked by rashness, levity, inconstancy; they give office to neophytes, to men entangled in worldly employs, to apostates from our body, hoping that, in default of truth, love of distinction will make them persevere. Promotion is never quicker than in a rebel camp, where the mere presence of the soldier gives a claim to reward. So, to-day one man is made Bishop, another to-morrow; he who to-day is a deacon will be a layman to-morrow; for laymen are entrusted even with the functions of priests." This passage shows clearly that the distinction of clergy and laity was familiar in the Church at the end of the second century, at which time therefore it was no recent introduction.

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The name of laity given to those who do not hold office in the Church means simply the people (λαός). To these are opposed the clergy, whose name is certainly derived from a Greek word signifying a lot (κλῆρος), or anything that was assigned by lot, especially the portion of an inheritance, an allotment. The Bishop, or other authorized person, when admitting an aspirant to the ranks of the clergy, cuts five locks of hair from his head, at the same time reminding him that thenceforth the Lord is the portion of his inheritance (Psalm xv. 5); just as among the Israelites the Lord Himself was the inheritance of the priests and Levites. (Deut. xviii. 2.) After the Ascension of our Lord, St. Peter pointed out to the assembled Church the need of appointing some fit person to fill up the place left vacant by Judas, who had obtained "part" of the Apostolic ministry, but by transgression fell away. And after prayer they gave them "lots," and the "lot" fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles. (Acts i. 15—26.) The word from which "clergy" is derived is used in this passage both for the "part" which Judas obtained and for the "lot" which designated Matthias; and probably we see here the origin of the ecclesiastical use of the word.

A clerk or cleric is a member of the clergy, but by usage the word is often confined to those who have gone through the initiatory ceremony when their hair is cut, but have not as yet advanced to any of the higher grades. We shall speak of these grades in our next chapter. (n. 804.)

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792. *The True Sacrament.*—The doctrine that the clergy are by Divine institution set apart from the laity and endowed with special grace fitting them to do their work, is involved in the first conception of the Church as being one visible apostolic body, the infallible teacher of men (nn. 199—247); and we find abundant proof of the doctrine in the New Testament. The ceremony of "laying on hands" is perpetually referred to, as marking that a person is set aside for the service of the Church (Acts vi. 6; xiv. 23); and this ceremony had in itself the virtue of giving grace (1 Timothy iv. 14; 2 Timothy i. 6); and St. Timothy is reminded of the responsibility that is upon him, if he lay hands on a candidate without due inquiry. (1 Timothy v. 22.) These Scriptural indications show plainly that the Apostles who were sent by Christ to preach to the whole world, and who received from Him the needful graces (St. Matt. xxviii. 18—20), understood that they were commissioned to keep up a succession to the end of time, by ordaining men to carry on the work, which men received grace through the instrumentality of the Ordination Service. The nomination of Barnabas and Saul to the Apostolic office was the direct work of the Holy Spirit, who revealed the will of God; but their ordination by prayer and the laying on of hands was the ordinary ceremony of which we read elsewhere. (Acts xiii. 1—3.)

It will be seen that the doctrine conveyed in these passages of Holy Scripture is exactly what is expressed by the declaration of the Council of

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Trent, that Order is a true Sacrament of the New Law: an outward ceremony has received by the institution of Christ the power of conferring a special grace. The same doctrine is perpetually taught by the Fathers or assumed by them as familiar knowledge. Thus Theodoret (*Hist. Relig.* n. 15; *P.G.* 82, 1416) pictures the scene where the candidate kneels, waiting for grace, and the officiating prelate, by laying on his hands, does the work of the Holy Spirit. St. Augustine expressly treats ordination as being a Sacrament in the same sense as Baptism (*C. Epist. Parmen.* 2, 13, 30; *P.L.* 43, 72); and similar passages are found in abundance. It is therefore without surprise that, on considering the argument from prescription (n. 655), we find in it conclusive proof that Order is a Sacrament.

793. *Subject of the Sacrament.*—The subject of the Sacrament of Order must be a baptized male. We have already shown that Baptism is the door by which entrance is obtained to the other Sacraments. (n. 692.) As to females, the constant practice of the Church shows that they are incapable of receiving any Order or even of holding ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The story, formerly so well known, that the choice of the Papal electors once fell on a female named Joan, is now rejected by all historians. (n. 262.) At one time it was usual to allow women a share in the works of charity carried on by the Church, and to admit them to office with solemn ceremony under the name of deaconesses or widows. (Romans xvi. 1; 1 Timothy v. 9.) The authority exercised by the Superiors in Religious

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Orders of females is merely motherly, and is not truly jurisdiction: and the same may be said of the duties assigned to deaconesses who helped to maintain order among the female part of the congregation. St. Paul expressly forbids women to speak in church (1 Cor. xiv. 34; 1 Timothy ii. 11), and the Councils had frequent occasion to enforce the Apostolic precept; but the difficulty found in restraining deaconesses from usurping the functions of the clergy seems to have been the reason why the practice of recognizing a class of female officials was gradually abandoned, and it is scarcely heard of in the West after the sixth century, and by the eighth century it had entirely disappeared.

If a ceremony of ordination be performed in spite of the positive dissent of the subject, it is void, but it may be valid if the subject be merely passive. We have already spoken of the case where the subject is an infant. (n. 679.)

794. *The Minister.*—The Minister of this Sacrament is a Bishop only; a mere priest is incompetent to ordain, even with special delegation of the Holy See, such as suffices for Confirmation. (n. 700.) When a Bishop is to be consecrated, the Pontifical requires that besides the "Consecrator" there should be at least two "assistant" Bishops, except where the Pope himself is Consecrator or has given specific permission to a Bishop to proceed alone. This rule was introduced to check clandestine consecrations, especially of men whose faith was suspected; nothing of the sort could be done unless three Bishops were found to connive at the crime.

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Some theologians have believed that neglect of the rule would render the ceremony invalid, but most think that a solitary consecration might be valid, though grievously unlawful; the assistants are not co-consecrators, they are no more than witnesses to the fitness of the candidate whom they in the name of the Church present to the Consecrator. Theologians are almost unanimous in holding that the consecration is the work of the Consecrator alone, and this consent puts the matter beyond doubt, although no occasion has arisen for an authoritative declaration by the Church on the point.

795. *Matter and Form.*—We have now to consider the question what are the matter and form of the Sacrament of Order, concerning which theologians are not agreed. We will first explain where the difficulty lies, and then indicate some of the solutions that have been proposed.

No one who believes that Order is a Sacrament will doubt that the rite which has for many centuries been used by every Bishop in communion with Rome contains all that is necessary for validity. To deny this would involve the consequence that true priesthood has long ago perished out of the Latin Church, and that the powers of consecrating and absolving have been lost along with it; and this will be said by no one who claims the name of Catholic; if there be a visible Church on earth, it certainly at least includes the Bishops in communion with Rome, as will be admitted even by those who hold that it is more extensive. The promise of perennity given

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to the visible Church (nn. 166—170) assures us that the Roman communion has never lost anything that is so essential as the true priesthood.

The Roman Pontifical is the book containing the details of all ceremonies which are performed by Bishops, and among the rest we find the rite of ordaining priests. We shall confine our observations to this rite, for no special difficulty arises in connection with the consecration of Bishops, or the ordination of deacons, or the other ranks in the Hierarchy. The principal acts in the ordination of a priest, as prescribed in the Pontifical, are the following: (1) Before the Gospel in the Mass, the ordaining Bishop and all priests who are present, lay their hands on the heads of each among the "ordinands," without uttering any words. (2) All hold their right hands stretched out over the whole body of the "ordinands," while the Bishop alone reads a prayer, asking God to multiply His heavenly gifts on those His servants whom He has chosen for the priesthood. (3) The Bishop vests each of the "ordinands" with the stole and the chasuble, or sacrificial vestment, and anoints the hands of each with the oil which is used in Baptisms. (4) He gives to each "ordinand" a chalice with wine and water, and a paten with bread, saying: "Receive the power of offering sacrifice to God, both for the living and the dead, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (5) The Bishop then proceeds with the Mass, in which the "ordained" say the words of consecration along with the Prelate. (6) After Communion, which the

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"ordained" receive under the species of bread only, the Bishop lays his hands on each of them, saying: "Receive the Holy Ghost: whose sins thou shalt forgive they are forgiven them, and whose thou shalt retain they are retained."

Such is the rite which has for many centuries been used by all Bishops in communion with Rome, and which is, therefore, certainly valid, as was explained just now. It is certain that the subject of the ceremony who was not a priest at the beginning is a priest at the end, but the difficulty is to tell at what part of the ceremony he became a priest and had the priestly character (n. 671) impressed upon his soul: in other words, when were the matter and form of the Sacrament applied to him. On this point three principal opinions are found in grave authors: the first holds that the matter is the act of the Bishop who stretches out his hand upon the group of ordinands, and the form is the prayer with which he accompanies the action; according to the second, the matter is the act of delivering the instruments of the Mass, and the form is the words uttered as they are delivered: the third requires both the imposition of hands and the tradition of the instruments.

Some points may be considered certain. The ordination has been effected before the time of the Consecration, for no one who was not a priest would be allowed to utter the sacred words with the Bishop; besides which, the rubric of the Pontifical, from the tradition of the instruments onwards, uses the word "ordained" in place of

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"ordinand," which had been used previously; it follows that the last laying on of hands, when the words refer to the power of forgiving sin, merely expresses what has already been done.

From this it might seem that the tradition of the instruments was the essential matter, or at least a part of it; and this, as we have seen (n. 789), is the teaching conveyed by the instruction given, by Pope Eugenius IV. to the Armenians, whose communion had been reconciled to Rome in that same Council of Florence which witnessed the submission of the Greeks. But this ceremony has certainly not always been everywhere requisite, as is the case, for example, with the use of water in Baptism; for the tradition of instruments was nowhere used in the Church till the ninth century, and is even now confined to the West; and yet the Roman Church fully recognizes the validity of the ancient rite employed in the East, although it contains no tradition. When Greek or Russian priests make their submission to Rome, they are not re-ordained even conditionally. Imposition of hands alone is mentioned in Holy Scripture, and in the records of antiquity.

The great scholastics from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, appear to have held that in the Western Church the tradition of instruments was essential, whether alone or following on the imposition of the Bishop's hands with prayer, and this opinion is held by some writers of the present day; they get over the difficulty arising from antiquity and Eastern practice, by ascribing to the Church

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a power to modify the matter and form of the Sacraments within certain limits. They think that Christ prescribed the matter and form in a general sense only, and left to the Church authority to limit this generality. It is essential that the matter should signify the grace (n. 661), for this is inherent in the nature of a Sacrament; they hold that the imposition of hands, as explained by the form accompanying it, was at one time sufficiently significant, but that the Church has seen fit to require a still more significant ceremony in the West, so that imposition of hands should not be sufficient unless followed by the express sign of the power of saying Mass. This view ascribes to the Church more power over the matter and form of the Sacraments than would generally be admitted, although it must be allowed that some such power exists, as we saw when speaking of the form of sacramental absolution. (n. 775.)

But for many years past, the tendency of theologians has been to regard the imposition of hands as being alone the essential matter, and to put the tradition of the instruments expressing the power of sacrificing on a par with the closing ceremony which expresses the power of forgiving sins. The advocates of this view explain the change of wording in the rubric of the Pontifical, "ordinand" and "ordained," as merely indicating that the tradition of the instruments has expressed that the work of ordination is now completed, so far as concerns the great act of consecrating which is close at hand. They take the "ordinand" to be one who is being

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ordained, whose ordination is in progress; the ordination including not merely the act which impresses the priestly character, but also that other act whereby is expressed a chief power which goes along with that character. As to the decree of Eugenius, it does not purport to be a complete treatise on the theology of the Sacraments, but seems intended only to instruct the new converts as to the practice of the Roman Church; and there is in it an express declaration that its contents are in part disciplinary and not dogmatic. (Harduin, *Concilia*, ix. 442.) There is therefore no assurance that the Pontiff intended to assert that the tradition was essential; but he called attention to a rite used in Rome supplementary to that imposition of hands which the Armenians already employed. It is certain that Eugenius recognized the validity of Eastern ordinations.

It need hardly be said that in the West the omission of either the imposition of hands or of the tradition would render the ordination doubtful, if not void; and therefore no one who had gone through a maimed ceremony could lawfully exercise any order he possessed, until he had been again ordained, at least conditionally.

796. *Anglican Orders.*—We have spoken at some length on the question as to the matter and form of the Sacrament of Order, because of its connection with a subject which is of too great interest to pass over, although it is in great measure historical and has small connection with dogma. We have said (n. 252) that a large number of religious com-

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munions separate from the Church are governed by men bearing the name of Bishop, and being in many instances, materially speaking, the successors of a line of undoubted Catholic Bishops. Thus there has been a continuous line of persons calling themselves Archbishops of Canterbury from the end of the sixth century to the present day. All the holders of this title from St. Augustine, who founded the see in 597, to Pole, whose death occurred in 1558, were recognized as Bishops throughout the Catholic world. The next claimant of the title after Pole was Parker. His claim was recognized nowhere outside England, and he is the spiritual ancestor of all the Prelates who exercise episcopal functions in countries where English is spoken, except those who derive their authority from Rome.

It is therefore a question of considerable interest whether Parker had the episcopal character. If he had, then probably the Prelates of whom we spoke just now are Bishops, and the men on whom they lay hands are priests. If Parker was not a Bishop, then there is no priesthood in the Anglican and kindred communions.

The question concerning Parker is warmly debated; as in other matters, we can do no more than mention shortly some of the considerations that are adduced on both sides.

Those who maintain the validity of Anglican Orders say that Parker was consecrated Bishop at Lambeth on December 17, 1559, by William Barlow, Bishop of St. David's, and John Hodgkins, a Bishop who held no see; and that Parker in his turn conse-

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crated other Bishops, so that the line can be traced by which his Orders have descended to the present clergy.

The fact that a ceremony which passed for the consecration of Parker took place on the day alleged, is proved by an entry in the register of such proceedings kept at Lambeth. Three other contemporary accounts of the ceremony are extant. They tell us that the rite used was that prescribed in the Book put forth by authority of Parliament, meaning the Book of 1549 which is mentioned in the thirty-sixth of the Thirty-Nine Articles (n. 790); and that Barlow held the place of consecrator, while Hodgkins and two others acted as assistants.

Such is the case in favour of the validity of Anglican Orders, and it appears at first sight to be satisfactory. Nevertheless, it fails to satisfy, and with a very few trifling exceptions, no Catholic theologian believes or has believed that these Orders are valid. We must consider the ground of their incredulity.

The fact that Parker had gone through any ceremony having the semblance of a consecration remained long unknown. The proceedings at Lambeth had been kept strictly private, and they were never mentioned, even when Catholic controversialists were most pressing in their demands for proof that the new Establishment possessed valid Orders. In 1563, some legal proceedings were commenced by the Government against Bonner, the deprived Catholic Bishop of London. The circumstances enabled Bonner to defend himself by

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denying that Horne, whom Parker had consecrated to fill the see of Winchester, was a true Bishop. An excellent opportunity was afforded of proving that Parker possessed true power to consecrate, but it was not used; the Government preferred to drop the prosecution. Nothing was publicly known of the existence of the Lambeth Register for more than half a century, when it was given to the world by Mason, in 1614, at a time when what are now called "High" notions on Order and kindred subjects began to be prevalent. It is no matter for wonder that suspicions were entertained as to the genuineness of the document published by Mason; and although the subsequent discovery of other contemporary accounts showed that these suspicions were ill-grounded, they were not unnatural; and it remains true that no reason can be suggested for this long concealment, except a fear that inquiry made while those concerned were still living would show the worthlessness of all that had been done.

There was good reason for this fear. Hodgkins, who acted as one of the assistants, was a true Bishop, but no one at that time, or long after, suggested that the action of an assistant Bishop could convey consecration, if he that officiated as consecrator were not truly a Bishop. (See n. 794.) Parker, therefore, had no consecration except what he received from Barlow, and there is grave doubt whether Barlow ever received any consecration at all. He was a man much employed in business by the Government of Henry VIII., and was rewarded by rapid promotion. He was transferred from see

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to see, and in June, 1536, he was legally in possession of the dignity and revenues as Bishop of St. David's. But the document by which these were conveyed to him, and in which in ordinary course the date of his consecration would have been mentioned, is silent on the subject; he himself proclaimed his belief that no such ceremony was needed to make a Bishop. The same is true of Cranmer of Canterbury, to whom it would fall to consecrate him, and Cranmer's register, which is extant, contains no notice of any such ceremony having been performed. This negative evidence makes it hard to believe that Barlow was a Bishop when he went through the ceremony over Parker; and if he was not then a Bishop, the case for Anglican Orders breaks down.

But assuming that Barlow was a true Bishop, there is grave doubt whether the rite employed by him in the case of Parker was valid. This rite, as we have seen, was what is contained in the Book put forth by authority of Parliament in 1549, and which continued in exclusive use till 1662. If this rite did not contain sufficient matter and form, the Anglican clergy have no Orders. We have seen that the Roman Pontifical points to Sacrifice as the great work of a priest, and the Sarum rite, used in most parts of England before the Reformation, did the same. The Book of King Edward differed in this, that it carefully excluded every word that pointed to Sacrifice, and gave exclusive prominence to the work of preaching; the delivery of a Bible was substituted for the delivery of the sacrificial

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vessels. It is true that the consecrator uses the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost," but these words by themselves are indefinite, for they might be employed in the rite of Confirmation. It is said, but on no sure authority, that these words have been held to be a sufficient form of Ordination, as used by the Abyssinians; but whatever may be their force when employed as part of a rite which has been in use from time immemorial in a Church which recognized that priests were offerers of Sacrifice, the case is totally different from that of a newly-devised rite, which has been composed on the principle of sedulous exclusion of all reference to a sacrificial function.

This very brief sketch of an immense controversy must suffice. Many side issues are raised, of which we can notice one only. It has occasionally happened that Catholic Bishops have apostatized and taken part in Anglican consecrations, as was done by Mark Antony di Dominis, Archbishop of Spalatro, in the beginning of the seventeenth century. But in no case did these men act as consecrators: they were merely assistants, and therefore did no more than was done by Hodgkins. It follows that, as we said, Anglicans have no valid Orders unless Parker was a Bishop.

Doubts were raised as to the validity of the Elizabethan Ordinations on other grounds besides those which we have mentioned; there is, for instance, strong ground for questioning the sufficiency of the intention (n. 683) of the consecrators. But enough has been said to explain the conduct

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of Rome in the matter. Rome has constantly for centuries treated it as certain that the Anglican clergy have no Orders; if they wish to be recognized as Catholic priests they must be ordained, without any condition. (nn. 209, 817.) We must conclude either that Rome believes Anglican Orders to be certainly invalid, or that the Roman authorities have for centuries systematically countenanced a series of sacrileges. (n. 682.)

797. *Recapitulation.*—Having proved that Order is a true Sacrament, we spoke of the subject and the minister, after which a doubt as to the matter and form detained us for some time. A digression followed on the historical question of the validity of Anglican Orders.

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CHAPTER II.

THE HIERARCHY.

798. *Subject of the Chapter.*—In the preceding chapter we have spoken of the clergy as one body, and have not referred, except in an incidental manner, to the existence of various grades among them. We have now to show that such grades exist, and that some at least among them are of Divine institution, while there are others which have been introduced by the Church. These last, it will be understood, do not come within the Sacrament of Order.

799. *Catholic Doctrine.*—The Council of Trent (Sess. 23; Denz. 843—845) has three canons relating to the Divine Hierarchy, which define the following points of doctrine; they follow after the canons which we have already given. (n. 789.)

6. There is in the Catholic Church a Hierarchy instituted by the ordination of God, which consists of Bishops, Priests, and Ministers.

7. Bishops are superior to priests; they have a power of confirming and ordaining, which is not shared with them by priests; Orders conferred by them, even without the consent or calling of the people or the secular power, are valid; such men

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as have not received due ordination and mission from the ecclesiastical and canonical authority, but come from elsewhere, are not lawful ministers of the Word and Sacraments.

8. Bishops appointed by the authority of the Roman Pontiff, are lawful and true Bishops, and not an invention of man.

800. *Various Views.*—These canons of Trent partly declare and partly assume the doctrine that the constitution of the Church is, by Divine appointment, a monarchy (nn. 199, 286), the Roman Pontiff being the monarch; but that it is no less a Divine appointment that the work of government should be carried on by a Hierarchy (n. 202), or sacred body of governors (ἱερός, ἀρχή), the chief posts in which are held by Bishops. (nn. 295—298.)

In opposition to this doctrine, it is maintained by some Protestants that the Church is an aristocracy, by others that it is a multitude of independent democracies. All agree in rejecting monarchy; the Prelatic sects (n. 250) maintain that the true form of Church government is an aristocracy, and they place the power in the hands of officials called Bishops, each of whom has the oversight of the clergy and laity within a diocese, just as the clergy have oversight of the several parishes. Perhaps no Prelatic sect has put forth any official declaration whether this constitution of the Church rests on Divine appointment or on human prudence. Some individual writers maintain that it is Divine, and that some rite of consecration is necessary to hand on the episcopal power from generation to genera-

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tion; others regard this arrangement as merely a matter of convenience, with a view to the maintenance of discipline; and here we have one of the chief differences that sever the "High Church" section of the English Establishment from the "Low" and "Broad" sections of the same body. The Presbyterians agree with the "High" Prelatists in holding that the Church is a divinely instituted aristocracy; but they differ in this, that they reject all government by individuals, and would have the affairs of each parish managed by a representative body, the parishes being united in a higher unity, governed by representatives of the whole district. The other Protestant sects deny that the Church is in any sense an organized body, and hold that there is no divinely appointed form of ecclesiastical government.

801. *Deacons and Priests.*—The Council of Trent, as we have seen, declares that the divinely instituted Hierarchy in the Church consists of Bishops, Priests, and Ministers. (n. 799.) Since Deacons are the highest order in the Hierarchy after Bishops and Priests, it follows that, according to the Council, the order of Deacons is of Divine institution; but the Council does not tell us whether the same can be said of Subdeacons and others.

We shall show the grounds on which the Church believes that the Apostles in seeking the assistance of deacons acted under the inspiration of God; that deacons truly receive the Sacrament of Order, and that they form a grade in the Hierarchy distinct from priests.

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"Deacon" is the English form of a Greek word (διάκονος) which is in common use, meaning one who busies himself in helping another in any employment. In its ecclesiastical use, it signifies the holders of the office of assisting the Apostles in temporal matters, as we read in the Book of the Acts (vi. 1—7), and their successors. St. Luke does not employ the substantive, but he says that the object of the appointment was to save the Apostles from the work of "being deacons" at the distribution of alms; using the verb. St. Paul uses the substantive more than once (Philipp. i. 1; 1 Timothy iii. 8, 12), and it clearly denotes a familiar office in the Church. The work done by Philip, who was one of the first deacons (Acts vi. 5), is recorded by St. Luke. (Acts viii. 5—8.) If these passages are compared, it will be seen that great care was exercised in choosing suitable men for the office, and in giving directions as to the needful qualities; that they had great spiritual gifts, were appointed by the solemn rite of laying on of hands, and were deemed worthy to be mentioned along with the Bishops as representing local Churches. All this implies that their office was something higher than what could owe its origin to man. The multitude of the faithful acquiesced in the proposal (Acts vi. 5), recognizing its utility, but it by no means follows that it was carried out by their authority. We learn from St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp that, in the second century, deacons held the same position as is indicated in the Scripture, and there is no need to quote later authorities.

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The work done by deacons at the present day differs from that done by St. Stephen, but the office is the same.

The rite by which deacons are ordained is almost certainly a Sacrament, although the point is not absolutely defined. The essential part is that the Bishop stretches out his hand over the candidate, saying, "Receive the Holy Ghost for strength and to resist the devil and his temptations, in the Name of the Lord." That deacons are an order distinct from priests follows from the practice of the Church in all ages, and is indicated in the Scripture. Priests alone are to administer Extreme Unction (St. James v. 14); they have the care of the churches (Acts xiv. 23; 1 Timothy v. 17; Titus i. 5), and we do not read the same of deacons; and the fuller records of after-times makes the point clear. It may be observed that deacons are often called Levites, because their functions were analogous to those of the Levites who were assistants to the priests of the Old Law. (Numbers iii. 6, &c.)

802. *Bishops.*—Since none who recognize that Order is a Sacrament doubt that priests receive it, we need not dwell on the point, but go on to show that Bishops form, and have always formed, a rank superior to priests and deacons, and that this superiority is of Divine institution.

The word Bishop etymologically means overseer, and Priest means Elder. The Greek originals of both words (ἐπίσκοπος, πρεσβύτερος) are of frequent occurrence in the New Testament, and seem not to

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be always used with precision; the verbal distinction was not fixed. But in the second and following centuries we find that the distinction between bishops and priests is no less marked than that between priests and deacons. Nothing can be plainer than the language of St. Ignatius the Martyr, who ventures to say that in the Church the Bishop presides in the place of God, and the priests represent the College of the Apostles (*Ad Magnes.* n. 6; *P.G.* 5, 764), and this Saint's Epistles are full of similar expressions. The Presbyterians find no answer to this argument, except to call in question the genuineness of the letters; a literary controversy shows that some letters had been wrongly ascribed to the Saint, but the rest were all the more fully shown to be genuine. Moreover, the distinction is found plainly expressed by Tertullian, and it is met with repeatedly in what are called the Apostolic canons, which represent the discipline of the Church of the second century. The sixth of these canons runs as follows: No Bishop, priest, or deacon is to undertake worldly business, under pain of deposition.

The passages of early writers which bear upon the subject always state or assume that in each Christian community there is one Bishop with an indefinite number of priests and deacons; and the Bishop is always exhibited as superior to the rest. In the Apocalypse (ii. iii.) we find that each of the seven Churches of Asia was under the care of an "Angel" or Bishop, and the same arrangement has prevailed from that time forward.

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This constant usage must certainly be a part of the fundamental constitution of the Church, and therefore must come from her Founder; besides which, there is no trace of the rule having been introduced by any Council, or other human authority.

The practice of the Church is absolutely uniform that the ordination of priests is a work confined to Bishops. This is proved not merely by negative testimony, from the fact that there is no trace of any pretending to be priests who did not allege that they had passed under the hands of a Bishop; but moreover, we have the express testimony of St. Jerome that a priest can do whatever a Bishop can do, except ordaining. (Epist. 85 [146], *Ad Evang.* n. 1; *P.L.* 22, 1194.) The exception is all-important for our purpose.

There has been some difference of opinion whether the consecration of a Bishop is an Order distinct from other Orders, and a true Sacrament. The affirmative seems to be the better opinion, for when St. Paul speaks of the grace that is in St. Timothy by the imposition of his hands (2 Timothy i. 6), he is certainly speaking of a Sacrament, and is probably referring to the act by which St. Timothy was raised to the Episcopate.

803. *The One Sacrament.*—There is but one Sacrament of Order, which is received in its fulness by Bishops alone; priests and deacons receive the same Sacrament truly, but partially. Were this not so, the Sacraments would be more than seven, against the established tradition of the Church. (n. 664.)

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804. *The Lower Grades.*—Besides Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, the Hierarchy contains various other grades. Immediately below the Deacons come Subdeacons, and then follow in order Acolytes, Exorcists, Readers, and Ostiaries. The Subdiaconate ranks along with the Diaconate and the Priesthood as a Sacred Order; the other grades are known as Minor Orders. All these ranks are very ancient in the Church, but it cannot be proved beyond doubt that they have existed from the very beginning, and therefore it is the common, though not universal, opinion of theologians that the rite by which they are constituted is not a Sacrament; a rite of human institution cannot be a Sacrament. The rite is contained in the Pontifical, for the minister is a Bishop; the essential part in each case is the delivery of the instruments of the office with an appropriate form. The duties of each office are described in an exhortation addressed to the candidates; these duties are of the nature which is indicated by the names. The Ostiaries, or Doorkeepers, were instituted to open and shut the doors of the church; the Readers were to read the Holy Scripture and other Lessons to the people, and are warned to be careful that their utterance is distinct and intelligible, and that no corruption of the sense is introduced by their changing words. The Exorcists have authority to exercise the power which Christ has given to the Church to cast out unclean spirits from persons who are possessed by the devil. (St. Mark xvi. 17; St. Matt. xvii. 14—21.) Acolytes, or attendants, prepare the bread and wine

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for the Sacrifice, which Subdeacons minister to the Deacon of the Mass. According to the present discipline of the Church, all these functions can be performed by laymen, except that no one who has not been commissioned by the Bishop may undertake the work of an Exorcist, whether he has received the Order or not.

805. *Order and Jurisdiction.*—It is of the greatest importance to observe that although the Sacrament of Order enables the recipient to perform certain functions, yet something more is needed to render the performance lawful. Thus, a Bishop can confirm and ordain, and the rite may well be valid, even if performed without authority; but it will be grievously unlawful, if done without jurisdiction derived immediately or mediately from the Roman Pontiff. The power of a priest is to consecrate and to absolve; but he cannot lawfully say Mass without the sanction of the Church, and his absolutions are not merely unlawful, but altogether invalid, unless he have received jurisdiction over the particular penitent. (n. 776.)

In regard to matters depending upon Order, all Bishops are equal; nor are Bishops superior to priests, as far as concerns the power of offering the Sacrifice and of absolving. But great differences are found among Bishops and priests in extent of jurisdiction; and any tonsured clerk who has no order (n. 791) is capable of receiving ecclesiastical jurisdiction. It is by Divine appointment that the Church is normally governed by Bishops to whom the charge of dioceses has been entrusted by the

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Apostolic See. The Roman Bishop alone has universal jurisdiction (n. 286), and the powers of all other Bishops are confined within the limits of their respective dioceses. But within these limits they act by a power which is inherent in their office, and therefore of the sort that is called ordinary (n. 268): they are not mere deputies and mouthpieces of the Holy See, such as are sometimes appointed provisionally, with or without the episcopal character, to manage affairs, when it is judged inexpedient to appoint an ordinary Bishop.

Bishops are accustomed to appoint one or more priests of the diocese to be their Vicars-General; these form one tribunal with the Bishop, and have the same power in all things in which the episcopal Order is not required.

It has been usual in all times of the Church to group several dioceses together, and to grant to the Bishop of the principal diocese of the group the title of Archbishop or Metropolitan. This Bishop is bound to seek from Rome the vestment called the pallium (n. 266), before the receipt of which he is forbidden to exercise any jurisdiction beyond that which belongs to other Bishops; but when fully constituted in his office, he has certain jurisdiction throughout the group, which is called his province. The other Bishops of the province are called the Suffragans of the Archbishop, who can entertain appeals from their decisions, and can, if necessary, visit their dioceses and correct whatever may be amiss. A Primate is properly a Bishop who stands towards several Archbishops in the same relation

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as they stand towards their Suffragans; and the word Patriarch is used in some cases in the same sense as Primate. In the earliest days of the Church, three patriarchates were recognized, having their seats at Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. These cities were chosen on account of their close connection with St. Peter, who was Bishop successively of Antioch and Rome; while the first Bishop of Alexandria was St. Mark, the attached companion of St. Peter. In later times, some patriarchal jurisdiction was recognized as belonging to Jerusalem, Constantinople, and other sees; and at the present day, the title of Patriarch is borne by the Bishops of many important cities, while in others the Bishop has no less authority, although he is called a Primate.

The titles of which we have been speaking are often used in a vague and inaccurate manner, and are sometimes merely honorary, and unaccompanied by special jurisdiction. The arrangements to which they point are of human institution: they have varied in different ages of the Church, and could be varied in the future, by the authority of the Bishop of Rome, the Patriarch of the West, to whose see the primacy in the whole Church is attached by Christ Himself. (n. 286.)

806. *Clerical Vocation.* — What we have said (n. 615) as to the grace of vocation to the life of perfection, applies in great measure to vocation to the life of a priest. The responsibilities attaching to the priesthood are so great, that no one would be justified in taking the office upon himself, unless

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he believed that he had received from God the invitation to serve Him in this state. As we said of the life of perfection, so here, the signs of this invitation are fitness for the state and desire of it, founded on a supernatural motive: and as in the other case, this motive may coexist with a natural motive leading to the same desire; and the supernatural desire may go along with a natural repugnance. In particular cases, great weight should be attached to the decision of an experienced and learned confessor.

807. *Celibacy.*—At the beginning of the rite for the ordination of subdeacons, the Bishop addresses a solemn warning to the candidates, to consider well how great is the burden which they offer to take upon themselves; he warns them that they are still free; but that when once the Order has been received they will be free no longer, but will be perpetually bound to serve God in chastity: and the candidates, taking a step forward, signify that they understand and accept the obligation.

This obligation of chastity has from the earliest days been regarded in the Latin Church as going along with the higher grades in the Hierarchy: and at present it attaches to the Subdiaconate. No marriage can be validly contracted by a subdeacon; nor can a married man lawfully receive the Order, unless his wife consents to perpetual separation from him, and herself vows perpetual chastity: the Order is a diriment impediment (n. 817) to marriage, as we shall see when the phrase is explained in the next chapter.

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This law insisting on chastity is of human institution, and it can be dispensed by authority of the Holy See: such a dispensation, however, is very rarely granted. Celibacy seems to have been practised by the higher clergy before it was enjoined by law; it is suggested by the favour promised by Christ to such as leave wife for His sake (St. Matt. xix. 27, 29); and by the doctrine of St. Paul that there is danger lest care for a wife call a man away from the service of God. (1 Cor. vii. 32, 33.) In another passage of the same Epistle (ix: 5) the Apostle claims to himself the liberty to carry about a woman, a sister, as well as the rest of the Apostles; and writing from Rome to the Philippians, he sends a message (Philipp. iv. 3) to his "sincere companion;" and we read of the care of St. Peter's wife's mother (St. Luke iv. 38) at an early period of the ministry of our Lord. These are all the Scriptural passages which the opponents of clerical celibacy have been able to bring together in support of their view. It is scarcely worth while to deal with them, but we may remark that because St. Peter had a mother-in-law at one time, it does not follow that he lived with his wife two years after: it is hardly probable that St. Paul had a wife living in Philippi while he was at Rome; that if the word translated "companion" means "wife," then the epithet "sincere" must mean "genuine" or "lawful," a true wife and not a concubine; and, what seems conclusive, the "companion" was not a woman, but a man, for the adjective "genuine" is in the masculine gender (γνήσιε): lastly, it is

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hardly likely that St. Paul would have furnished his opponents at Corinth (1 Cor. i. 12, &c.) with an effective taunt against him, if he urged others to adopt a celibate life while he himself enjoyed the company of a wife. St. Jerome is doubtless right in believing that the "woman, a sister," was a Christian woman who accompanied St. Paul in his laborious journeys, and ministered to his wants, according to a practice approved by Jewish public opinion and adopted by Christ Himself. (St. Matt. xxvii. 55, and St. Jerome on the passage; *P.L.* 26, 214.) When St. Paul requires (1 Timothy iii. 2) that a Bishop should be the husband of one wife, the meaning is that no one is fit for the dignity who has taken a second wife after the death of the first.

That celibacy was the practice of the clergy in the earliest times is proved by the absence of indications to the contrary. One of the earliest laws upon the subject is perhaps the thirty-third canon of a Council held at Elvira in 305, which requires "Bishops, priests, and deacons and all clerics" to abstain from their wives: and in the course of the same century we find the same law enforced in other parts of the Church. It is therefore altogether false to say, as some writers do, that clerical celibacy was a novelty introduced into England by St. Dunstan, and forced upon the whole Church by Pope St. Gregory VII. It is true that the ravages of the barbarians had led to great relaxation of discipline throughout Christendom, and that these two Saints incurred much odium through their zeal in restoring primitive order; but the existing monuments of

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history prove that what they insisted on was nothing new.

It is true that not all who take this solemn obligation upon themselves have been faithful in observing it; but their frailty merely illustrates the weakness of human nature: and in the worst times the morality of the clergy has stood high, when contrasted with the practice of the laity.

808. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has given some details concerning the Catholic doctrine of the Divine Hierarchy, showing that the one Sacrament of Order is received in increasing fulness in the three highest grades, and that all the members of each grade are equal as regards Order, however much they may differ as to jurisdiction. The Treatise closes with a few remarks on the subjects of clerical vocation and celibacy.

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Treatise the Twenty-Second.

Matrimony.

809. *Plan of the Treatise.*—In this short Treatise we shall show that Christian marriage is a Sacrament, and shall point out the respects in which it differs from merely natural marriage.

The treatment will be strictly confined to dogmatic matter. The subject of marriage is vast, and has ramifications in every branch of human life; and when speaking of it we shall often be tempted to wander off into historical inquiries and discussions bearing on social economy. But we must keep within our limits, and these require us to confine ourselves to the teachings of Theology, leaving the rest of the field to other authors.

810. *Definitions.*—It will be convenient to begin with the explanation of the meaning of some terms which we shall have frequent occasion to employ.

When a man and a woman lawfully enter on an agreement for life-long cohabitation, we have *Marriage.* The immediate effect of the agreement is to produce what is called *Matrimonium Ratum,* for which phrase it is hard to find an English equivalent: this is turned into *Matrimonium Con-*

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summatum as soon as the act is performed which is of its own nature apt to lead to the generation of children. If persons capable of marriage mutually promise that they will hereafter enter into the contract, they are *espoused*.

What has been said so far is applicable to all marriage. If both parties to a marriage are baptized, we have *Christian Marriage;* it is called a *Mixed Marriage*, if one of the parties is a member of the visible body of the Church (n. 186), and the other is baptized but is not a member of that body. This case must be distinguished from that of *Disparity of Worship* strictly so called, where one party is baptized and the other unbaptized, and therefore, in technical language, an infidel. In some countries it is possible for persons to contract true Christian marriage, which is perfectly good in conscience and ordinary estimation, but which the law of the country declines to recognize as having any civil effects touching succession to property and dignities, or the like. Such marriages are called *Marriages of Conscience*, or *Morganatic Marriages;* the origin of this last name must be sought in the ancient usages of German princely houses, among whose members alliances of this nature are not uncommon.

It sometimes happens that two persons go through a ceremony which has the semblance of being a marriage between them, but which for some reason is not a marriage; in this case, the marriage is said to be *null*. As we shall see (n. 814), nothing can put an end to the bond of a consummated Christian marriage, except the death of one of the

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parties; but in some countries the State refuses to recognize this principle, and takes on itself to *dissolve* marriages, by a decree which purports to put an end to the bond. Such a decree is absolutely valueless in conscience, and it does not give liberty in conscience to either party to marry again, so long as the other lives. Dissolution of marriage must be carefully distinguished from what is called *Separation from Bed and Board*, or *Judicial Separation*, which justifies the parties to a marriage in living apart, but does not purport to enable either to marry again during the life of the other. It is unfortunate that Nullity, Dissolution, and Separation are often confounded under the name of *Divorce;* when this word is met with, care is necessary to determine what is meant.

Marriage is the union of one with one. In some states of society, *Polygamy* has been in use (πολύς, γάμος), or union of one with many; this may take the form of *Polyandry*, where one woman is united to many men (ἀνήρ); but Polygyny (γυνή) is far more common, where one man is united with many women. Polygamy must be understood to mean polygyny, unless the context makes it clear that polyandry is included. It need hardly be said that both practices are unlawful, and are no true marriage. (n. 813.)

811. *Marriage a Sacrament.*—That some peculiar sacred character attaches even to natural marriage is clear from the mysterious account of the origin of the institution which we read in the Book of Genesis. (ii. 18—24.) We cannot undertake to explain the

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full meaning of this account, but we have the authority of our Lord Himself for saying that the declaration, "man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh," describes a feature common to primitive marriage and Christian marriage. (St. Matt. xix. 3—9.) St. Paul also quotes these words in connection with Christian marriage, which he calls a great Sacrament (Ephes. v. 28—32), but we do not rest upon the use of this word (n. 661), either in this place, or in the many places of the Fathers where it is applied to marriage. The conclusive proof that Matrimony is a true Sacrament is found in an argument which we have often used before. (n. 665.) For many centuries the doctrine was accepted as a part of the common teaching, which no one thought of disputing; in the fourteenth century, the scholastic Durandus raised doubts about the matter; these led to discussion, and in the end the explicit statement of the doctrine was universally received. The doctrine was in possession (n. 665), and this justified the decrees of Florence (n. 136) and Trent (Sess. 24, can. 1; Denz. 847), which declared it to be an article of faith.

The same arguments prove that the Sacrament is indissolubly united with the contract of marriage between Christians: wherever marriage is contracted by a valid contract between Christians, they receive the Sacrament, whether they be in communion with the Church or are separated from it; this inseparability of the contract and the Sacrament is plainly taught by Pope Pius IX. in an Allocution dated

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September 27, 1852 (Denz. 1501 and 1614), and by Pope Leo XIII. in an Encyclical of February 10, 1880.

The question who is the minister of the Sacrament of Matrimony seems to have been first raised by Melchior Canus, a Dominican theologian of the sixteenth century. Canus maintained that the minister was the priest who gave what is called the nuptial blessing to the new-married pair; whence it would follow that no marriage was valid unless a priest took part in the ceremony, for where there is no Sacrament there is no contract. Not a few theologians adopted this view, probably under the belief that a valid contract could be entered into without the Sacrament being conferred. This is now known to be impossible, and it is held by all, that the parties themselves are the ministers of the Sacrament; there is no other way of explaining why, when a husband and wife pass from Protestantism to the Church they are not remarried; they are treated as having already received the Sacrament, which no one administered to them but themselves. If it be objected that most Protestants do not regard Matrimony as a Sacrament, and therefore cannot have the intention of administering it, the reply is the same as may be made in the case of Baptism, which may certainly be administered by one who denies the sacramental character of the rite. It is sufficient if the intention is to perform the Christian ceremony of initiation or to enter into Christian marriage. (nn. 682, 683.)

Since two competent persons can validly marry

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without the assistance of a third, it follows that they are capable of putting the matter and form. The matter, as commonly assigned, is the bodies of the parties, considered as being that over which each party yields power to the other; and the form is found in the words or signs by which each expresses assent to the contract. Another view makes the matter to be the proposal of the contract, while the acceptance is the form.

812. *Effects of Matrimony.*—When persons marry they enter upon a totally new state of life, and they have mutual rights and duties altogether different from those which bind unmarried persons. Among other things, marriage justifies cohabitation which would otherwise be unlawful; the spouses have a special duty of mutual fidelity; they are bound to co-operate in the proper education of their offspring, providing them with food and other necessaries, seeing that they receive suitable instruction in religious and secular knowledge and that they are trained in habits of piety and virtue; and in general they must assist each other to lead happy Christian lives. Grave misconduct may justify the innocent party in withdrawing from the company of the offender, provided the grounds of this unfortunate necessity are approved by the Bishop or other ecclesiastical judge. It belongs to canonists and moralists to go into detail on all these matters.

It is clear that married life has special difficulties, however true it may be that these difficulties are less than what would be encountered by the parties, had they remained unmarried. It is therefore fitting

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that Christian marriage should have been raised by God to be a Sacrament; those who receive this Sacrament worthily, not only gain an increase of habitual grace (n. 670), but also they are ensured a more abundant supply of actual graces, such as may from time to time be necessary to enable them to do their duty, and carry out the purposes for which marriage was instituted.

813. *Unity of Marriage.*—By the unity of marriage is meant the rule by which polygamy, in both senses of the word (n. 810), is forbidden to Christians. This unity may be regarded as peculiarly characteristic of the Christian law, for among all peoples where civilization is not based on Christianity, we may expect to meet with the recognition of polygyny, or perhaps of polyandry. Probably no sect that claimed to be called Christian has ever held polygamy to be justifiable as a general practice, although there are some cases where persons professing to be Christian ministers have permitted, or at least connived at it, in peculiar cases. The American Latter Day Saints, or Mormonites (n. 111), are not an exception, for they have slender claims to be called Christian. We have proof of the disastrous effect of polygamy upon society in the fact that bigamy is punished as a crime in all states whose civilization has been derived from the Gospel, however little inclined their governments may now be to be influenced by religious considerations. Unity of marriage is part of the original institution. This follows from the account which we have already quoted from Genesis (n. 811), where we read that

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they shall be two in one flesh, not three or more. This law was in some sense relaxed in favour of the Patriarchs and those that came after them. (Genesis iv. 19, &c.) There is some difference of opinion among theologians as to the nature and extent of this relaxation, but the question does not concern us, for we are speaking of Christian marriage exclusively, as to which the Council of Trent (Sess. 24, can. 2; Denz. 848) defines that it is unlawful for Christians to have more than one wife at a time. The doctrine follows clearly from the words of Christ, citing the passage from Genesis (St. Matt. xix. 5), and from the express teaching of St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 2—5); and we have already pointed out that no Christian body questions it. In words, the Council speaks of polygyny only; but no one will doubt that polyandry is equally forbidden; uncertainty as to the paternity of a child adds immensely to the evil that is found in all cases of nativity outside wedlock.

The Christian law does not forbid successive marriages, when after the death of one spouse, the other contracts a new alliance. But a certain stigma attaches to conduct which has some appearance of inordinateness; and St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 39, 40) uses language which certainly discourages the second marriage of a widow. We have seen (n. 807) that to have married more than once is an objection to an aspirant to high place in the clergy; such a one is called, in the language of the Canon Law, a bigamist; this word is more commonly used to signify that the person has attempted to have

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two wives or two husbands at the same time, in contempt of the law of unity of marriage.

814. *Marriage Indissoluble.* — Consummated Christian marriage is, as we have said, indissoluble except by the death of one of the spouses. Putting aside for the moment the case of adultery (n. 815), and that in which a natural marriage has been contracted between two unbaptized persons one of whom afterwards receives Baptism (n. 816), we rest our doctrine on the plain words of Christ (St. Luke xvi. 18): "Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery." If the putting away of a wife dissolved the marriage, there could be no question of the particular crime of adultery; this cannot be committed except where one party to the act is married: it follows that the "putting away" does not dissolve the marriage. The same doctrine is assumed by St. Paul (Romans vii. 2, 3) as familiarly known, and furnishes him with an illustration of a totally different subject. In another place (1 Cor. vii. 11), the Apostle recognizes that necessity may arise for a separation from bed and board, but carefully distinguishes this from dissolution of the marriage (n. 810); and in a passage which we have already quoted (Ephes. v. 28—32, n. 811), he treats marriage as an image of the union between Christ and His Church; this image would be very inappropriate if the one union were dissoluble while the other is certainly permanent.

The practice of the Church has been absolutely

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uniform and in full accord with this doctrine. Not a single instance can be found in history where the Holy See has so much as entertained any question that involved the dissolution of a consummated Christian marriage. The principle is fully recognized that what God has joined no man can put asunder (St. Matt. xix. 6), and has been upheld against what might have seemed irresistible pressure. Thus in 1200, the powerful King Philip Augustus of France was minded to put away his lawful wife, Ingelborga, the daughter of the King of Denmark, and he solicited the sanction of the Pope, Innocent III. His application was, of course, refused; he nevertheless proceeded to carry out his purpose, but the Pontiff was stout in his defence of the unity and indissolubility of marriage, and by spiritual censures reduced the proud monarch to obedience to the Christian law. The English Henry VIII. was more stubborn, and Pope Clement allowed the flourishing realm to be borne into schism rather than comply with the King's unlawful demands for permission to put away Catherine, his true wife, and take another. His allegations that the union which he contracted was no true marriage were duly weighed, but found insufficient; and this decision was final, for permission to break a true marriage was not to be thought of.

Some persons find a difficulty against what we have been saying in the fact that history speaks occasionally of princes and others obtaining from Rome divorces from their wives enabling them to marry again. This word is misleading, as we have

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already pointed out. (n. 810.) It may naturally be understood to mean that the Holy See professed to dissolve a marriage: but it will be found that in every case of which the circumstances are known, no more was done than to pronounce a sentence of nullity: what had seemed to be a marriage was authentically declared never to have been a marriage; the parties therefore were free, for they were at liberty to act as if there was no bond between them: and if the sentence of nullity was well-founded, there actually was no bond. If it was ill-founded, as is always possible with a human tribunal, then the bond in fact existed, but the parties were justified in the eyes of men in acting as if it never had existed. It is sometimes alleged that these sentences of nullity were obtained by false witness and bribery. Complaints of the sort are not uncommon in the mouths of all classes of unsuccessful litigants; but Theology has nothing to do with the question whether fraud was successfully practised: it remains true that the Holy See has never professed to dissolve consummated Christian marriage. This distinction between dissolution and declaration of nullity is no baseless fiction of casuists: it is perfectly well recognized in all tribunals which deal with marriage; it is familiar to the law of England, where in 1892 the court pronounced sentences of nullity in fourteen cases, besides assuming to dissolve marriage in more than three hundred instances. There is no reason to doubt that the decrees of nullity may have been well-founded; for instance, one party to a union may

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discover that the other party is still under the bond of a previous marriage; of course the second ceremony is no true marriage, but the innocent party is not legally free until a sentence of nullity has been pronounced.

Reference has just been made to dissolutions of marriage granted by the civil court. This altogether un-Christian practice originated in England in the seventeenth century, since which time it has spread widely, with ruinous consequences to society. The first dissolution of marriage by authority of Parliament occurred in the year 1665. A letter has survived which tells by what disgraceful means the passing of this disgraceful measure was secured. An agent of the petitioner writes that he got six-and-forty of the House of Commons to the Dog Tavern at Westminster, and gave them a dinner: and as soon as they had dined, they were "carried" to the House and passed the Bill without amendments. (Historical Manuscripts Commission, Belvoir Castle.)

815. *A supposed Exception.*—We have already cited from the Gospel of St. Luke (xvi. 18; see n. 814) the words in which Christ declares the absolute indissolubility of marriage without exception; and we find the same recorded by St. Mark. (x. 11.) But we find two passages in the Gospel of St. Matthew which appear to limit the extent of this declaration and establish an exception: for in the Sermon on the Mount, the liberty conceded to the Jews to give a bill of divorce (Deut. xxiv. 1) is restricted, and the instruction is given that "whoso-

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ever shall put away his wife, excepting the cause of fornication, maketh her to commit adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery" (St. Matt. v. 32): and again (xix. 9), "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery." At first sight, these texts seem to authorize a man in dissolving his marriage in case of adultery by his wife, and a difficulty arises in defending the teaching of Trent (Sess. 24, can. 7; Denz. 853), that the Church does not err in teaching, in accord with the doctrine of the Gospel and the Apostles, that the bond of marriage cannot be dissolved on account of the adultery of one of the spouses.

The difficulty is undeniably considerable, but it must admit of explanation, for otherwise the Christian people, who had the text of St. Matthew before them, would not have believed that no exception could be allowed. They are influenced, doubtless, by their conviction that the same teaching was conveyed in all the places of the Gospels and Epistles which refer to the matter, and that marriage is no less absolutely indissoluble than is the union of Christ and His Church, which never can be broken. It is impossible to import any exception into this text, or into the other passages cited from St. Paul just now (n. 814): and it is arbitrary to suppose that an exception is to be understood in the words taken from St. Mark and St. Luke. If then an explanation can be found of the words of exception

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in St. Matthew, which makes all the texts consistent, this is to be adopted: and that explanation is at once found if we consider that the words "put away" in St. Matthew refer to separation only and not to dissolution. In fact, the text itself requires this explanation, for the woman who is put away commits adultery if she marry another; this would not be true if the "putting away" had dissolved her marriage.

What we have given seems the simplest explanation of the difficulty. Wrangling might be long kept up by those who wished to justify the recent practice of dissolution by authority of the State, which is often allowed for causes far less than the one which St. Matthew is supposed to assign; and the matter affords a good instance of the impossibility of arriving at any assured interpretation of Scripture, except in the light of the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church.

816. *Imperfect Marriage.*—So far we have been speaking of consummated Christian marriage. But indissolubility cannot be alleged of *matrimonium ratum* (n. 810); on the contrary, the Church recognizes two cases where a marriage which is a contract merely, and not perfected by act, can be dissolved. The first of these occurs when one of the parties, through desire of a more perfect state, renounces conjugal life, and takes on himself, or herself, the burden of solemn religious vows. (n. 615.) The imperfect and perhaps improvident contract is not allowed to stand in the way of the person embracing the life of higher service of God (1 Cor. vii. 38);

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but it would be unjust to force one who had not received or recognized the call to perfection to remain in the world, under bond to a partner who had freely assumed a higher obligation; and for these reasons, it has been held from ancient times that *matrimonium ratum* is dissolved in these circumstances. The proof of the antiquity of the persuasion is found in the not infrequent history of saints who have contracted marriage, but have left home that very day, and never used the rights that their contract gave them. St. Alexius is a well-known instance of this sort, whose history can be read in the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum.* (July 17.)

Even apart from the case of the design of embracing religious life under vow, circumstances may arise which make it highly expedient that persons who have contracted a *matrimonium ratum* should recover their liberty; and the Roman Pontiff has long exercised the jurisdiction of releasing them from the inchoate bond. It is well that this power should exist somewhere in the Church (n. 817); and it is well also that it should not be exercised except by the supreme Pastor, and by him only in cases of the gravest necessity; and it is only in these cases that it is claimed, as will be acknowledged by all who peruse the published reports of cases. As a matter of fact, this jurisdiction has long been exercised by the Roman Pontiffs, without question being raised as to the lawfulness of their action; and on the principles that we have established (n. 209), this fact is of itself sufficient to prove that they possess this power.

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There is one case where we have direct revelation that a non-Christian marriage may be dissolved, even after consummation. We read in the seventh chapter of the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (vv. 12—16), that if any brother have a wife that believeth not, and she consent to dwell with him, he is not to put her away, and the reason is added that perhaps the unbeliever may be converted: and the same is said where the wife is the Christian. But if the unbeliever depart, the believer is not under servitude in such cases. This passage is the foundation for the doctrine that if one party to a marriage of infidels is converted and receives Baptism, and the infidel refuses to live peaceably with the new Christian, then the new Christian is at liberty to contract marriage with any Christian, and thereby to dissolve the bond of the infidel marriage. This "Pauline privilege," as it is called, often removes obstacles that would otherwise stand in the way of conversions to the faith.

817. *Impediments and Dispensations.*—A matrimonial impediment is a circumstance affecting any person, male or female, rendering it unlawful, and perhaps impossible, for that person to contract marriage either at all, or with some particular person. That such impediments may exist is seen clearly if we consider the case of a person who is already married, who cannot contract a new union without violating the principle of the unity of matrimony (n. 813); or of one who is bound by a promise to marry a certain person, and who cannot without injustice marry another. A *diriment* impediment is

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one which makes a proposed marriage impossible: that which makes it merely unlawful is called *impedient*. Many impediments of both sorts arise out of the nature of the case, independently of any will of man; those which we have given as examples are of this kind; and it follows that no human power is able to dispense them. Neither the Roman Pontiff nor any other authority can make a man capable of having two wives, or authorize a breach of faith when persons have entered into valid espousals.

But further: it may be expedient that certain marriages should be hindered which are not naturally invalid or unlawful. Thus, it is plainly undesirable that parents who are charged with the religious education of children should not be followers of the same religion; and therefore it is well that hindrance should be put in the way of union between a Catholic and an infidel or heretic. It were to be wished that mixed marriages were unknown, and much more those marriages where there is disparity of worship (n. 810): at the same time, it must be admitted that in particular instances, more harm than good would arise from hindrance being put in the way of marriages of either of these two classes. It is right therefore that an authority should exist having power to institute matrimonial impediments, both impedient and diriment, and to dispense from them in fitting cases. (n. 265.)

This authority is found in the Church, as is proved by the fact that the authority was exercised for many centuries before it was ever called in

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question. As early as the year 315, a Council of Neocæsarea instituted an impediment of affinity, forbidding a woman to contract marriage with the brother of her deceased husband (Hefele, *Conciles*, i. 218); and the power was often exercised and was never questioned until the time of the Reformation. As we said regarding the dissolution of *matrimonium ratum* (n. 816), this constant practice amounts to a dogmatic definition (n. 209), and justifies the Council of Trent in declaring (Sess. 24, can. 4; Denz. 850) that the Church has power to institute diriment impediments. The power as to impedient impediments will be questioned by no one who admits the greater power.

Not only does the Church possess this double power of impeding and dispensing, but it belongs to the Church exclusively; the State has no power in the matter, as regards the marriage of Christians. The reason is that, as we have seen, the contract of marriage differs from all other contracts in this, that the Sacrament is inseparably connected with it (n. 811), and the State can have no control over a Sacrament. The State can regulate the civil effects of marriage as it pleases, for these lie within its province; and it exercises this power in its treatment of morganatic marriages (n. 810); these effects are independent of the Sacrament; but it has nothing to do with the validity of the contract itself. What is here said of impediments and dispensations extends to all matrimonial causes, so far, that is, as they concern the Sacrament. The judge in all such causes is the Bishop, subject to appeal

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to the Holy See. (n. 269.) As to dispensations, some can be granted by the Bishop, but others are reserved to the Pontiff; the parish clergy have no power in these matters.

We do not propose to invade the province of the Moralists and treat of the impediments to Matrimony, but we may remark that the impediment to mixed marriages is impedient only, while that of disparity of worship, properly so called, is diriment. A mistaken notion sometimes prevails that marriages cannot lawfully be celebrated at certain times of the year, especially Lent; nothing is really forbidden except the appearance of festivities unbefitting the penitential season.

A word must be said on the impediment of clandestinity, or secrecy, as it might be called. It is never lawful to celebrate marriage without the presence of a priest and two witnesses, and in many countries the marriage is not even valid unless the two witnesses accompany the parish priest of one of the parties, or some other priest having his authority. Thus, the impediment of clandestinity is merely impedient in England and Scotland, while in Ireland it is diriment. The reason of this difference will be understood when the origin of the diriment impediment is considered. It originated in a decree of the Council of Trent, and was to come into force in each parish forty days after the formal promulgation of the decree in that parish. The ceremony took place within a few years in most countries where the Catholics were organized in regular parishes; but where this was not the

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case, the required promulgation was impossible, and therefore the new impediment was never introduced. In these countries clandestine marriages are still valid though illicit. It will be observed that it is incorrect to say, as is sometimes done, that the Council of Trent is not "received" in the countries where the decree has not been published; this phrase seems to imply that the authority of the Council is questioned, if not rejected; the truth is that all the decrees of the Council, both dogmatic and disciplinary, are fully received throughout the Church; but that in some countries, for sufficient reasons, a condition has not been fulfilled, on which the Council wished the obligation of the impediment to depend, but which it left to the discretion of the Bishops.

We have said that before the Council, clandestine marriages were everywhere valid. This is opposed to the current theory of English lawyers who hold that the presence of a priest was always necessary in this country to the validity of a marriage. The courts are bound to accept this doctrine: but no decision, even of the House of Lords, can fetter the historian; and the highest living authority on the subject declares in favour of the account which Theology gives; and it is observed that considering the many appeals about matrimonial matters that were being taken to Rome, it is impossible to believe that the insular law differed on so vital a point from what is acknowledged to have been the rule in the rest of Christendom, without attention being called to the matter. And yet there is no hint of any such

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distinction. (See Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, ii. 371.)

818. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has indicated the Catholic doctrine concerning Christian Marriage, which is wholly based on the elevation of the natural contract to the dignity of a Sacrament. It is this circumstance that gives the Church exclusive jurisdiction over all questions relating to the marriage bond; it also enables us to speak on certain points relating to the unity and absolute indissolubility of Christian wedlock with greater certainty than can be attained with reference to natural marriage.

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Treatise the Twenty-Third.

The Last Things.

CHAPTER I.

DEATH AND JUDGMENT.

819. *Plan of the Treatise.*—In the present Treatise we shall say something of as much as is known concerning what are called in the language of Catholic catechetical instruction, the Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven. These subjects are eminently well calculated to rouse our curiosity, and a feeling of disappointment is apt to attend the discovery that not much has been revealed to us beyond what is needed for our guidance, while the teachings of reason are more scanty still. We must not attempt to satisfy our curiosity by giving heed to baseless speculations and guesses, which abound. In these pages we shall say nothing beyond what is plainly taught to us by the tradition of the Church, based on Holy Scripture, together with a few points on which there is general agreement among approved authorities, although they cannot be considered as established doctrine.

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In one chapter we shall speak of Death and Judgment, in the next of Hell and Heaven. The circumstances under which the present order of things is to come to an end will be noticed in the third chapter, while a fourth explains that article of the Creed by which we believe in the Communion of Saints.

820. *Subject of the Chapter.*—The Holy Scripture encourages us to look on Death from various points of view, some of which will be indicated, and it will be shown that Death is universal: no man will finally escape it. Immediately after death, the soul of each man is judged by Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, and receives sentence, according to his faithfulness in striving to fulfil the end for which he was made, and giving glory to God (n. 433); and the sentence passed at this judgment is put into execution without delay. All this will be proved and illustrated in the present chapter.

The greater part of what we have just said is theologically certain, perhaps without being defined faith; a few points may occur where two opinions are tenable, and these will be noted when we come to them.

Our knowledge of the whole matter is derived from revelation, although reason may suggest the likelihood of some part of what man learns from a yet higher source.

821. *Death.*—Death is the close of life, and as there are three senses in which a man may be said to live, so we find in Holy Scripture the mention of three forms of death. No men are so truly living as

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those who, having attained the end of their creation, are admitted to the supernatural vision of God (n. 830); and they who fail to attain this glorious destiny suffer eternal death. The habitual grace of God (n. 637) is the supernatural life of the soul, the possession of which is the pledge of eternal life; therefore, the loss of this grace is called death, and the sin which entails this loss as its punishment is mortal or deadly sin. But by death is most commonly meant the cessation of the natural life of man, by the separation between his soul and body, which occurs as often as the body of a man becomes through accident, disease, or decay, unfit to be informed by a soul. (n. 466.) It is in this sense that we shall now speak of it.

We learn from Holy Scripture that Death is the sequel, punishment, and fruit of sin, the work of Satan (St. John viii. 44), which God made not (Wisdom i. 13), but which is an enemy to be vanquished by Christ. (1 Cor. xv. 26.) Death is called dissolution (Philipp. i. 33), the laying away of the tabernacle or tent which gives temporary shelter to man while on a journey (2 St. Peter i. 13; and see Deut. i. 27: St. John i. 14, *ἐσκήνωσεν*); it is the end (St. Matt. x. 22), it is rest (Apoc. xiv. 13); it is the time of arrival at the goal of a journey (Josue xxiii. 14; Wisdom iii. 2); it is a falling asleep (Deut. xxxi. 16; Acts vii. 59); it is a return of the body to dust (Genesis iii. 10), and of the spirit to God who gave it. (Eccles. xii. 7.)

The dogmatic points to be established concerning death are that it is the fruit of sin, is universal for

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all mankind, and is the end of the state of probation. (n. 448.) We have already shown (n. 487) that by sin death came into the world, and that it is universal is proved by experience, as well as by the declaration of Scripture that it is appointed to men once to die (Hebrews ix. 27); and this truth is so clear that no heretic ever taught that men could escape the common destiny; the most promised by them has been a speedy restoration to life; no man can avoid the humiliation which Christ was pleased to take upon Himself. (Romans vi. 4.)

We must notice some peculiar cases of which we read in Scripture. In the fifth chapter of Genesis we have the genealogy of the Patriarchs between Adam and Noe, and among the rest we are told of Henoch, the father of Mathusala, that he lived three hundred and sixty-five years, considerably less than those who came before and after him, and no statement follows that he died, as we read of the others, but we are told that "he walked with God and was seen no more, because God took him." We learn a little more from the panegyric on the holy fathers found in Ecclesiasticus (xliv. 16): "Henoch pleased God and was translated into Paradise, that he may give repentance to the nations;" and St. Paul declares (Hebrews xi. 5) that by faith Henoch was translated that he should not see death, and he was not found because God had translated him; for before his translation he had testimony that he pleased God. Concerning the Prophet Elias, we read that as he and his friend and successor, Eliseus, were walking, a fiery chariot and fiery horses parted

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them both asunder, and Elias went up by a whirlwind into heaven. There are references to the same event in other places of Scripture (Ecclus. xlviii. 13; 1 Mach. ii. 58), but they add little to our knowledge. We have already mentioned that Elias was seen along with Moses, conversing with Christ at the time of His Transfiguration. (n. 548.)

It seems clear that these two men did not suffer the ordinary fate of mankind, whereby the body ceases to be informed by the soul and corrupts; they are still living. Nothing is known as to where they may be, and all sorts of guesses have been made. It is very commonly supposed that they are the two witnesses mentioned in the Apocalypse (xi. 3), and that they will in some way be instrumental in crushing Antichrist. (n. 835.) But there is no reason to suppose that they constitute any exception to the law of death for all men; they will die finally, however long their death is deferred.

Some difficulty is felt as to those men who shall be living on earth at the time of the Second Coming of the Lord. We are told that Christ shall judge the living and the dead (2 Timothy iv. 1), and yet it is scarcely credible that any men should be judged and afterwards die. It may be thought therefore that some will pass to their final state without going through death; and the same result seems to be pointed to in some obscure verses in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (iv. 14—16); also, in the Greek text of another place (1 Cor. xv. 51), we read expressly: "We shall not all die, but we shall be changed." But in spite of the doubts

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raised by these places, it is held by almost all authorities that death will be the lot of all men, without exception; the reading in the place last referred to is uncertain, for the Vulgate Latin has, "We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed," and the doubt as to the words makes it unsafe to build an argument on the text; the words addressed to the Thessalonians cannot be understood without more knowledge concerning the consummation of the world than we possess; and as to all three texts, it is suggested that death implies a more or less continuous separation between soul and body, whereas the men whom Christ shall find on earth at the last day may go through nothing but a momentary severance, followed immediately by a reunion.

That death closes the time of probation follows from what we shall prove presently (n. 822), that man is judged immediately on his death, that the judgment is at once put in execution (n. 823), and that it is final and irrevocable.

822. *The Particular Judgment.*—It is the ordinary belief of Catholics, expressed in the Roman and other Catechisms, that each human soul is judged by God immediately after its separation from the body, and this Judgment is called Particular, to distinguish it from the General Judgment of all men, which will take place at the end of the world. (n. 838.) The conviction of Catholics on this subject is so constant as to make the truth certain, although no express definition has been put forward by the Church.

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It is impossible to tell what is the ordinary view held by Protestants upon the subject, which is avoided in their authoritative works, and in great measure by private writers also. Probably the greater number of them, both learned and unlearned, if pressed, would either avow ignorance on the matter, or would say that the soul spends the time between death and the General Resurrection (n. 836) in unconscious sleep.

The essential point in the doctrine of the Particular Judgment is that the separated soul, immediately after death, becomes aware whether God's grace is with it or whether it is in enmity with Him; and that this is so follows from the assured truth which we shall prove presently, that the entry of the soul on its final state of reward or punishment is not delayed. (n. 823.) In the light of this truth we are able to understand certain texts of Scripture, which taken by themselves might admit of other explanations. Thus, it is easy before God in the day of death to reward every one according to his works (Ecclus. xi. 28); and it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the Judgment (Hebrews ix. 27); to understand this text of the Particular Judgment is far more natural than to interpolate an indefinitely long time of unconsciousness or of inactive expectation. The Good Thief was with Christ in Paradise on the day of his death (St. Luke xxiii. 43); and Judas was in his own place while St. Peter was speaking (Acts i. 25): and this supposes Judgment to have been passed upon them.

It is commonly understood that the newly-

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departed soul is judged by Christ, and either in the very place where the death took place or in Heaven. But these and other details are quite uncertain, and before the time of the Incarnation the Judge must have been God; the impression that it is now Christ probably arose from the analogy of the General Judgment. (St. Matt. xxv. 31; 2 Cor. v. 10.)

823. *The Sentence executed.*—The Particular Judgment destines the soul to Heaven, Hell, or Purgatory, according to its spiritual state; and we have to show that the execution of the sentence is not suspended, but that it follows immediately. As to those souls that pass to Purgatory (n. 829), the point is settled by the practice of the Church, which encourages prayer for the departed soul immediately after it has left the body. (n. 95.) It was defined by Pope Benedict XII., in 1336, that the souls of those that die in actual mortal sin at once go down to Hell (Denz. 456); and this will probably be doubted by no one who believes that those who die in grace are at once admitted to Heaven. This point was defined by the same Pope, and we must now exhibit the proof of it.

St. Paul yearned to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord, and he treated these phrases as equivalent (2 Cor. v. 8); he felt the conflicting desires, to be with Christ and to abide still in the flesh (Philipp. i. 23, 24): these expressions would be meaningless unless early death meant early admission to Heaven. Christ on the eve of His Passion promised His disciples that He would go and prepare a place for them, that where He was

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they might also be (St. John xiv. 3), and this would be unintelligible if the Just were excluded from Heaven till the last day; and He promises that He will come quickly and His reward is with Him, to render to every man according to his works (Apoc. xxii. 12); this can hardly be understood unless it refer to Christ coming to each man at the time of his death. The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (St. Luke xvi.), to say the least, favours our view; but it cannot be pressed as an argument, for it is uncertain how far it is safe to draw dogmatic conclusions from what may be called the "setting" of a parable. The chief lesson conveyed does not concern the Four Last Things; besides which, we cannot be sure what is meant by "Abraham's bosom."

It is objected that the doctrine of a Particular Judgment and sentence at once put in execution renders the General Judgment needless; this difficulty will be considered in its own place. (n. 838.)

The definition of which we quoted from Pope Benedict XII., was issued because certain Easterns who held a false doctrine on the point were gaining followers in the West, and it was reported that Pope John XXII. had been won over. It would seem that this Pope was not prepared to condemn the error, but there is no proof that he held it, still less that he taught anything opposed to what Benedict defined. The theologians infected by the Greek error belonged chiefly to the Order of the Minorites.

824. *Recapitulation.*—The matter of this chapter has been very simple: Death, followed by Judgment, and Judgment by execution.

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CHAPTER II.

HELL AND HEAVEN.

825. *Subject of the Chapter.*—We spoke in the preceding chapter of the three sentences—Heaven, Hell, Purgatory—which might be passed at the Particular Judgment; we must now consider these in more detail, and it will be convenient to speak first of Hell, or the place and state of eternal punishment, from which the grace of God and the vision of God are alike absent; we shall then consider the place and state of temporal punishment called Purgatory, where the grace of God is found, but not the vision of Him; lastly, in Heaven we shall find the blessed souls which are in assured enjoyment of the Beatific Vision.

826. *Hell.*—We have already (n. 551) had occasion to explain the various senses in which the word Hell is used. It is here employed in its strictest sense, for the place where those who depart this life with the guilt of actual mortal sin are tormented eternally with sensible pain, as well as regret for the loss of that possession of God which was offered them. We shall establish the truths assumed by this account in the following paragraphs, and first we must show that sin is punished after

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this life. To prove this belongs to the writer on Ethics rather than to the theologian, for it is not a matter on which it will avail to quote the Holy Writings; the doctrine will be questioned by none but such as refuse to accept the authority of the Scripture. But if we take as admitted the existence of God as the wise, holy, just Ruler of the universe, we see that Wisdom will impel Him to secure the observance of His laws, not by threatening only, but by actually inflicting the punishment which He has threatened; and it is obvious that this punishment is not inflicted in the present life, where the wicked often prosper, and it must therefore be reserved for the life to come. Also, One who is holy and powerful will not allow iniquity to triumph; He cannot be indifferent, and by indifference really foster evil; lastly, justice requires that he who has outraged his brother should not be allowed to enjoy the fruits of robbery undisturbed. These and other reasons have had great influence, and men of all times and nations look forward to punishment overtaking the impious beyond the grave; this universal persuasion can have had no origin except a primeval revelation, or the cogent force of considerations such as we have mentioned.

827. *The Pains of Hell.*—The intensity of the pains of Hell is indicated in a multitude of passages of Holy Scripture; we must be content with a few specimens. Hell is spoken of as the "place of torment," peculiarly designed and furnished for the purpose. (St. Luke xvi. 28.) Some passages tell how good are the things which God has prepared

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for them that wait for Him (Isaias lxiv. 4), things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man (1 Cor. ii. 9); and by contrast we may conceive how evil are the things prepared for the enemies of God. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews x. 31); Hell is the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth (St. Matt. viii. 12, &c.); in Hell, all creation unites to fight against the enemy of the Creator. (Wisdom v. 21.) We are not to be afraid of them who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but we are to fear Him who after He hath killed hath power to cast into Hell; yea, we are to fear Him. (St. Luke xii. 4, 5.) When we consider the torments which man has inflicted on the body of his fellow-man, and reflect that these torments are of no account compared with the pains of Hell, we shall have no need to look further for proof of the intensity of these pains.

So far we have said nothing of the nature of the punishment with which God visits those who die obstinate in rebellion against Him, and in fact very little is known about it. As usual, we have no revelation as to details, and our natural curiosity must remain unsatisfied, but what we know is amply sufficient for our guidance; come what may, no one who knows the Christian revelation can say that he has not been warned.

A few points however seem clear. Just as in sin there is a double malice, the turning of the will away from the Creator and a turning towards the forbidden creature, so the punishment of sin is

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two-fold, the loss of God, which is negative, and the positive infliction of pain. These two elements are pointed to in the words which will convey the sentence of condemnation: "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire." (St. Matt. xxv. 41.) They are commonly called the pain of loss and the pain of sense. The reason of the first name is obvious; the second is not addressed to the senses, for these are bodily organs, while pure spirits and the disembodied souls of men can feel this pain; but the name suggests that the pain is inflicted by an agency which is of its own nature suited to act upon the senses as well as immediately upon spirits.

The pain of loss is the feeling of regret for the folly which threw away a great and lasting good for the sake of a petty and trifling pleasure. It is expressed in the words of Wisdom: "We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour; behold, how they are numbered among the children of God." (Wisdom v. 4, 5.) This contrast between what is and what might have been is a gnawing pain of the mind, which is likened to that endured by the man who dies gnawn by worms. (Ecclus. vii. 19; St. Mark ix. 43, &c.)

The pain of sense is spoken of as inflicted by fire. Many heretics have refused to admit the distinction, and hold that the fire spoken of in Scripture must be understood in the same way as the worm; a merely metaphorical expression for intense suffering. This opinion cannot be called heretical, although few Catholics have been found to maintain it, and to do so has long been

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held to be rash, if not erroneous. (n. 328.) As to one particular form of this opinion, it has been declared by the Congregation of the Inquisition (April 30, 1890) that no one who obstinately holds it is capable of absolution; and this decree leaves no room for doubt as to the side that will be taken, if ever a dogmatic definition is issued on the general subject.

It follows that the fire of Hell, not being metaphorical, is something real, a creature distinct from the sufferer, and having for its end the infliction of pain. The reason for this belief is found in the language of Scripture, which frequently speaks of fire as the instrument of punishment (St. Matt. xiii. 42, xviii. 8; 2 St. Peter iii. 7, &c.), and this language must be taken literally, unless reason be shown for supposing a metaphor. No such reason can be shown, and the metaphorical sense seems to be altogether excluded by the words of the sentence which we have quoted as indicating the distinction between the two pains. (St. Matt. xxv. 41.) The wicked are to depart into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels. No one can depart into the remorse which he carries about with him, nor was that remorse prepared for another person.

All objections to the literal understanding of this word, whether alleged in ancient or modern times, seem to rest on the assumption that the likeness of the fire of Hell to ordinary fire can be pressed to its utmost consequences. Thus, ordinary fire requires constant supplies of fuel, such as it is

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hard to suppose to be the case with the fire of Hell; and it is difficult to see how fire can torment pure spirits. Those who urge these difficulties assume that they understand the nature of hell-fire better than St. Augustine (*De Civit. Dei*, 20, 16; *P.L.* 41, 682), who avowed his ignorance. Whatever points of resemblance there may be between the fire of Hell and what we call fire, there are certainly many differences; the one comes from God as Avenger of His law, the other from the same God as Author of nature; the one is kindled by the breath of God (Isaias xxx. 33), the other consists in certain chemical operations. The fire of this world acts on matter only, and is soon extinguished; hell-fire acts immediately upon spirit, and lasts for ever. Fire gives light on earth, in Hell it produces darkness, as is suggested, rather than proved, by the Gospel. (St. Matt. xxii. 13.) Further than this it seems that we know nothing; but no plausible reason can be assigned for denying to God the power to create a substance such as has been described. As there are gradations in the happiness of Heaven, as will be shown (n. 83), so it seems certain that the pains of Hell are greater or less according to the demerits of him that suffer; but no direct authority is found bearing on the point. God is equally lost by all, but the loss is felt more or less keenly according to unknown conditions.

828. *Eternal Punishment.*—The Catholic Church teaches that the pains of Hell are eternal, as is set forth in the Athanasian Creed, which declares that they who believe not, without doubt shall perish

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everlastingly. (Denz. 135; see n. 401.) This doctrine is taught so expressly in Scripture that they who question it are bound to give clear reason for doing so. Thus the future punishment is called eternal (St. Matt. xviii. 8); it will last for ever and ever. (Apoc. xiv. 11, xix. 3.) The fire shall not be extinguished, and the worm shall not die. (St. Mark ix. 43.) The same duration is ascribed to Hell as to Heaven (St. John iii. 36; St. Matt. xxv. 46, &c.); it were better for Judas that he had never been born (St. Matt. xxvi. 24), which would not be true if he were destined one day to reach Heaven. The practice of the Church is in accord with her doctrine; for she prays for all men who are still in the body, and for those who have departed in the grace of God but are detained in Purgatory, that they may speedily enter Heaven; showing clearly her belief that there is always hope on this side of the grave, but that after death no change is possible.

The testimony of Christian tradition on the interpretation of these passages of Scripture is perfectly uniform, for certain theories on the matter attributed to Origen and his followers were avowedly the results of private speculation. There is a story, too famous to be omitted but of no weight, that St. Gregory the Great was struck with an instance of generosity which was attributed by tradition to the Emperor Trajan, and prayed that this pagan might be allowed to enter Heaven, and his prayer was granted. (Jo. Diac. 2. 44; *P.L.* 75, 105.) The authority for the story is very slight, and if true it would merely prove that Trajan was in Purgatory and

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not in Hell; the possibility of which we need have no difficulty in admitting. (n. 694.) Some Catholics have thought that from time to time the pains of the damned are mitigated, and if this is understood of a temporary mitigation, as for example at Eastertide, nothing decisive can be urged against the view, the adherents of which claim for it the high support of St. Augustine (*Enchirid.* n. 110, 112; *P.L.* 46, 283); but the slightest permanent mitigation would accumulate and amount finally to cessation, which cannot be admitted. Some who are not Catholics have imagined that the souls for whom there is no place in Heaven may sooner or later cease to exist; as to which view it is enough to say that it has no positive foundation, it is against analogy, for we know of no case where God withdraws His conservation from the creature which He has once called out of nothing, and that it is opposed to all the teaching of revelation as to the eternity of punishment.

This teaching is so plain that it is strange to find that some heretics have questioned it, and have expended much learning and labour on the endeavour to prove that the words "eternal" and the like do not necessarily imply unending duration. If this be so, we should have expected to find some hint to that effect in the holy writings, which certainly have led all generations of students, with few scattered exceptions, to believe that the literal meaning is intended. But the question brings us back to the difference between Catholic and Protestant as to the Rule of Faith (nn. 106—108); and

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we believe, for the reasons set forth in the first volume of this work, that Catholic tradition is a safer guide than the results of Greek and Hebrew scholarship.

We may doubt whether the obvious meaning has ever been questioned by any who approached the subject free from prejudice and fully prepared to accept whatever the Scripture seemed to teach. It is difficult to avoid prejudice in the matter, on the principles held by almost all Protestants. Nothing defiled can enter Heaven, and there is no man without sin: if then no provision is made for washing off stains in the world beyond the grave, it follows that the vastly greater portion of the human race must suffer the pains of Hell. The Catholic is not pressed by this conclusion, which may well excite horror, for he knows that the souls of those who die without attachment to actual grievous sin may go through all needful cleansing in Purgatory. (n. 829.) But the Protestant has rejected this most consoling doctrine, and is forced to maintain a view against which many minds revolt as worse than atheism: and the Calvinistic section are taught that they ought to rejoice in the torments suffered by the bulk of mankind, including infants, not as the consequence of any fault of their own, but merely in pursuance of an arbitrary irreversible decree of God.

The Catholic doctrine is that Hell is the portion of those who leave this life with the guilt of actual mortal sin. If a sin be such that the punishment of Hell is more than is deserved by the malice involved, then that sin is not a mortal sin. As to

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the comparative numbers of those that are saved and that are lost, we have no certain or even probable information; and the guesses of approved writers vary immensely. (n. 391.) We have already said (n. 696) what was necessary concerning the lot of infants that die without Baptism either of water or of blood, and therefore still under the guilt of original sin, but without actual sin.

829. *Purgatory.*—In the Creed of Pope Pius IV. (n. 401, v.; Denz. 866) we profess that there is a Purgatory and that the souls there detained are helped by the prayers of the faithful. This is the whole of the defined doctrine of the Church upon the subject. The earlier Protestants were filled with a strange spirit of fury in attacking this consolatory teaching, and the Church of England declares that this doctrine is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God. (Article 22.) Notwithstanding this declaration, the doctrine is found to be so much in harmony with the rest of Christian teaching, that there is now a steady flow of opinion in its favour among those Protestants whose tendencies are Arminian (n. 496) rather than Lutheran or Calvinistic (nn. 478, 543); and all who hold that the punishment of the wicked is not eternal in fact hold what is in substance the doctrine of Purgatory. The eyes of God are too pure to behold evil (Habacuc i. 13), whether this evil be the guilt of venial sin (n. 596) or the liability to punishment that may remain when the guilt of sin is forgiven. (n. 768.) Those who die subject to either

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of these forms of evil cannot enter Heaven, where the eye of God would behold them; yet as they are in grace, Heaven is their portion; it follows therefore that some process of cleansing is possible, and this process is called Purgatory, from the Latin word meaning to cleanse.

This being so, it is no marvel to find that the practice of prayer for the dead is of old standing in the Church, and this practice is inexplicable except on some view equivalent to that held by Catholics. The practice was treated as of Apostolic origin as early as the days of Tertullian, who in forcible words avows that for this and other parts of Christian usage there may be no authority in Scripture, but tradition and custom assured support. (*De Coron. Mil.* 4; *P.L.* 2, 80.) St. Augustine speaks concerning his dying mother (*Confess.* 9, 13, 36; *P.L.* 32, 778) and tells us that she begged only that she might be remembered at the altar, saying that she knew that from the altar was distributed the saving Victim, by which is blotted out the handwriting of the decree that is against us (Coloss. ii. 14): and in the East, St. Cyril of Alexandria wrote against those who denied the utility of these prayers. (*P.G.* 76, 1432.) Other Patristic passages to the same effect will be found in Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics.*

There are several passages of Scripture which are readily seen to refer to the doctrine of Purgatory (St. Matt. v. 25, 26, xii. 32; 1 Cor. iii. 12—15), but which do not separately avail to prove it: in the Second Book of Machabees, however, we have an

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express declaration on the subject. (2 Mach. xii. 40—46.) Certain of the Jews had died in battle with the heathen, and there was reason to fear that they had sinned not long before their death; so sacrifices were offered for them, and this is exactly the course that charity would dictate to any Catholic. It is true that sacrifice could not profit these men unless they repented of their sin before their death; but they might have obtained forgiveness for their guilt and have passed to Purgatory, where they would be in need of prayer; and so an occasion arose for acting on the principle which is expressly stated, that it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.

The doctrine of the Particular Judgment (n. 822) proves to us that the holy souls in Purgatory are assured of salvation; they know that they are in the state of grace, and that they cannot lose it by sin. They suffer the pain of temporary loss, longing for that Beatific Vision (n. 830) to which they cannot yet be admitted; and there is general agreement that they suffer also pain of sense, which point, however, is not absolutely certain: it was discussed at the Council of Florence, in 1439, but was deliberately left undecided. The doctrine that there is fire in Purgatory no less than in Hell (n. 827) was almost universal among the Fathers of the Latin Church: but the Greeks had difficulties about it, and therefore it was deliberately omitted from the decree of union. At the present day, perhaps no author of note adheres to the Eastern view.

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However this may be, there can be no doubt that the pains of Purgatory are intensely severe, but further than this we cannot say. Nor is anything known concerning their duration, nor whether while they last they are gradually mitigated or remain unchanged to the end. There are some trustworthy private revelations (n. 22) bearing on these and other such questions, but the interpretation is not always clear; and there is never any means of knowing whether the experience revealed was ordinary or was confined to a particular case. It is to be remembered that pure spirits are not under the ordinary conditions of time (n. 375), and that therefore we can understand nothing by phrases which may seem to refer to the length of the period of detention: the suffering of centuries can be compressed into a second. This is the explanation of the difficulty sometimes felt concerning the Purgatory of the last generation of men. It will be remembered that all things are present together to the Eternity of God (n. 371); and therefore the practice of the Church, which encourages long perseverance in prayer for the departed, does not imply that their need is of equally long continuance.

830. *Beatitude.*—Heaven is the name given to the state and place of those men who have been faithful to their Creator and are found at death to be in His friendship, and thus attain their end, which is the possession of God. This state is called the state of beatitude or happiness, for the happiness of man is found in no creature, but in union with God by intellect and will: this doctrine

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is explained in Ethics. This union or possession is spoken of in Scripture, as the vision of God, or seeing Him: "We shall see Him as He is" (1 St. John iii. 2); they are blessed who shall see God (St. Matt. v. 8): and this vision will be clearer than is possible in this life. (1 Cor. xiii. 12; n. 350.) If ever doubt has arisen whether it is possible for the creature to see the Creator, the mistake arises from a confusion between seeing, and comprehending: God can be seen, but He is incomprehensible (n. 351); He is truly seen, but the vision does not take in all that is in Him.

This vision is plainly supernatural, for naturally it is impossible, as we have seen (n. 350); and the Scripture holds it out as belonging to the adopted sons of God, which adoption is a supernatural grace given to men. (n. 637, v.) God is the invisible King (1 Timothy i. 17), who inhabiteth light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen nor can see (1 Timothy vi. 16); which words can be reconciled with those in which the sight of God is promised, only by supposing that the eye of the soul which is naturally unable to see God will be raised to a supernatural power. It is to the same purpose that we read, how no one knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him. Baius, in accordance with his general tendency to represent as natural to man that which is truly God's free gift, taught that had man persevered in the state of innocence, beatitude would have been his as wages earned by him and not as a free favour: this teaching was condemned. (Prop. 3; Denz. 883.)

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The bodily eye requires ordinary light to enable it to see the material objects around it: when light is thrown on the scene that which was invisible becomes visible. This familiar truth has suggested to theologians a suitable mode of speaking concerning the elevation of the soul to the state of seeing God: they say that this is done by the intervention of a flood of the "light of glory." Further questions at once arise as to what this light of glory is, and how it produces its effect; but no assured and satisfactory answer is forthcoming, and so we are obliged to leave the matter.

The Blessed have the happiness to know that they will never sin. Origen is believed to have held the contrary, just as he doubted the eternity of punishment (n. 828), and thus extended the time of probation indefinitely far beyond the grave. But the expressions used in Scripture put the matter beyond doubt. Heaven is called eternal life (Romans vi. 22); it is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that cannot fade (1 St. Peter i. 4); a never-fading crown of glory (1 St. Peter v. 4); in Heaven no rust or moth doth consume, nor do thieves break through and steal. (St. Matt. vi. 20.) Sin would corrupt the inheritance, cause the crown to fade, steal the treasure; so that we safely conclude that in Heaven there is no sin. Were it otherwise, Heaven would not be perfect happiness, for assured permanence is one of the conditions required. In fact, the soul, seeing God clearly, will see all good in Him, and will not be attracted to any partial imitations of His goodness such as are found in creatures.

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831. *Heaven.*—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for those that love Him." (1 Cor. ii. 9, on which see Cornelius à Lapide.) We saw that the greatness of the pains of Hell is indicated in Scripture vaguely, but with terrible force (n. 827); and the text that we have quoted serves to set the joy of Heaven before us so as powerfully to allure, but not so as to satisfy curiosity. Fulness and certainty are often unattainable; but we must try to explain one point as to which we are assured, and some others as to which there is probable conjecture.

It is of faith that there are various degrees of happiness among the blessed in Heaven, corresponding to their higher or lower degree of grace and consequent union with God. (n. 638.) This was defined in the Council of Florence (Denz. 588), but denied by Luther, in accordance with his doctrine of justification by faith. (n. 627.) The teaching of Scripture is plain. God will reward every one according to his work (St. Matt. xvi. 27, &c.); every man receives his own reward, according to his labour (1 Cor. iii. 8); he that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth in blessings shall also reap blessings. (2 Cor. ix. 6.) St. Paul trusted that there was laid up for him a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just Judge, would render to him; that judge would not be just who gave the same reward to all, irrespective of their deserts. Jovinian, the ancient Stoic heretic, held that all sins were equal, for all were offences

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against God, and that by parity all merits and all rewards were equal; but he was confuted by St. Jerome (*Contra Jovin.; P.L.* 23), who pointed out the absurdity of supposing that a death-bed repentance put the life-long sinner on a level with the Apostle and Martyr.

The Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard (St. Matt. xix. 30; xxi. 16) presents a serious difficulty: those who laboured but one hour had the same reward with those that had toiled through the heat of the day. But we notice that in our doctrine the substantial reward is God, who is possessed by all the Blessed alike, although they vary in degrees of happiness derived from this possession. Also, we have no right to assume that true desert is proportioned to the time spent in labour; this will be so doubtless, if other things are the same in both cases; but even the human master may see that the last comer may by greater diligence have fairly earned more than those who have been present in the vineyard throughout the day; much more may this be known to God, who sees the hearts of men, and who rewards the faithful endeavour, even if it be fruitless. It would seem indeed as if the inculcation of this truth were the principal object of the parable, which opens and closes with the words that the last shall be first, and the first last: but here, as elsewhere, it is not easy to be sure that we have been successful in disentangling the dogmatic teaching of the parable from its accessories.

The soul which gains admittance to Heaven is regarded as espoused to Christ, the Lord, and as

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receiving a three-fold dowry, corresponding to the three theological virtues. (n. 644.) Sight replaces faith, attainment satisfies hope, and enjoyment succeeds to the yearning love, which is the form taken by charity in the present life. When the body is reunited to the soul, at the general resurrection (n. 836), this glorious body receives its own dowry, in virtue of the merits of the soul; this is commonly supposed to consist of four elements, the first being that the body is impassible, or incapable of suffering, for liability to pain would be inconsistent with perfect happiness: the others are the power of penetrating enclosures, such as was enjoyed by Christ after His Resurrection (St. John xx. 19), of passing from place to place without time being occupied, and of being bright with glory. These are called respectively subtlety, agility, and brightness. It will be observed that the second and third are reduced to independence of space and time, such as belongs to pure spirits. (n. 375.)

Those of the Blessed who have won conspicuous victories over the three enemies of man, the world, the flesh, and the devil (1 St. John ii. 16), are believed to be decorated with a special mark of their success: these are called the "aureola" of martyr, virgin, or doctor.

It may have been observed that we have said nothing about the place of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. The reason is that nothing is known upon the subject beyond the fact that words like "go down" are used of Hell, "ascend" of Heaven; from this it is concluded that the place of punish-

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ment is within the earth, the place of happiness outside it. But further than this we cannot go.

832. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has established the three great truths that there is a place of eternal punishment, a place of ceaseless happiness, and a place of temporary cleansing; but many questions which naturally arise concerning them have been left aside, for no clear answers have been revealed.

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CHAPTER III.

THE END OF THE WORLD.

833. *Subject of the Chapter.*—A short chapter will suffice to tell the little that is known concerning the events which will foreshadow and accompany the close of the present order of things upon the earth. The Church is perennial, and will not lose the aid of her Divine Head, who has promised to be with her until the consummation of the world (St. Matt. xxviii. 20); at that time the work of the Church Militant will be done, although the Church Triumphant will last for ever in Heaven. (n. 830; Apoc. xxi. 4.) We know this for our consolation, but we know little more: the Church Militant has not needed, and therefore has not received any clear revelation as to the time and manner of the impending change. A few hints can be gathered, which we will endeavour to put in order.

834. *Prophecy.*—No inconsiderable portion of Scripture is occupied with prophecies, or statements as to events which were to happen at some future time, far beyond the natural knowledge of the writer. Some such prophecies have been fulfilled, more especially those that relate to the Birth, Life, and Death of the Messias: and we have used these as

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furnishing proof that the Christian religion is Divine in origin. (nn. 56—63.) Some of these prophecies were known and understood correctly (St. Matt. ii. 5), and gave a foreknowledge of the event: others, and as it seems far the larger part, were not understood until the event spoken of had occurred (St. John ii. 22; St. Luke xxiv. 27; Acts viii. 31); but in the light of the event the prophecy became clear, and accredited him who had uttered it as a Divine messenger. It is in this sense that Moses instructed the Israelites that the test of a true prophet was the occurrence of that which he declared to be about to occur (Deut. xviii. 22): this test would be nugatory, if the primary end of prophecy were to give foreknowledge, but its suitability will be seen when it is understood that this end is often to secure credit to the prophet, and whatever message he brings.

This being so, we need feel no surprise to find in Scripture a large amount of prophecy which has not yet received its fulfilment, and the meaning of which is obscure. Unfulfilled prophecy is found everywhere in Scripture, but more especially in the Books of Ezechiel and Daniel, in the Gospels and in the Apocalypse. The interpretation of these passages is most difficult, and often seems impossible with our present knowledge; but the time will come when the course of events will light up much that now is dark. A special difficulty arises from the circumstance that one and the same prophecy may point equally to two or more events, each of which is a partial fulfilment. This is well seen in the

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discourse of Christ recorded by the three Synoptics (St. Matt. xxiv.; St. Mark xiii.; St. Luke xxi.); some phrases here foreshadow events all of which would happen within the lifetime of some men then on earth (St. Luke xxi. 32), but it would seem that this cannot be said of the whole, at least in the fullest sense. The complete fulfilment will not be seen until the last day comes; but some parts had a true reference to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus: this was understood by the Christians of the time, who took to heart the warning given to them (St. Luke xxi. 20, 21), and availing themselves of an opportunity offered by the movements of the Roman army, fled from the doomed city and sought refuge in Pella. (Euseb. *H.E.* 3, 5; *P.G.* 20, 221.) But it is comparatively seldom that prophecy is thus practically useful.

The prophetical books are full of numbers, apparently marking the interval separating various events. In some cases, these indications have been understood before the event, as in the well-known instance of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel (n. 58); but far more commonly they serve merely to furnish a series of insoluble problems, on which multitudes of interpreters, more or less well equipped, have spent their labour. Thus, the two witnesses, who are supposed to be Henoch and Elias (n. 821), are to prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days (Apoc. xi. 3; xii. 6); and there are other perplexing hints which suggest that some two momentous events are to be separated by this interval: it is called forty-two months (Apoc. xi. 2; xiii. 5) and

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"a time, times and half a time," or three and a half years. (Daniel vii. 25.) But we are quite in the dark as to what these events are, and the annals of all nations have been rummaged in the attempt to penetrate the secret. The fall of the Roman Empire, the rise of Mohammed, the French Revolution, have all had their advocates; and heretics not uncommonly use this period in their calculations as to the date when, as they fondly imagine, the Church built on the Rock of Peter shall fall. We may take it as established that no assured numerical result can be obtained from the study of these numbers; the only exception being that one prophecy which, though uttered centuries before, filled the East with expectation at the time of the coming of Christ. (nn. 57, 58.)

835. *Antichrist.*—We may feel some confidence in saying a little concerning Antichrist. This word means "Opposed to Christ," and it is used for some power hostile to the Lord and His Anointed. Many such powers have existed and done their worst (1 St. John ii. 18), and the Lord hath derided them. (Psalm ii. 1—4.) But a time will come when some particular person will gather into one society all the enemies of God, and make himself their head. (2 Thess. ii. 3.) Some have thought that he will be an incarnation of Satan, but this is less probable: he will be a mere man. He will emulate the actions of Christ, and will find many followers. The final struggle in which the impostor will be subdued is perhaps described in the Apocalypse. (xx. 7—10.)

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836. *The Resurrection.*—It is a fundamental point of the Christian religion that the day will come when the true bodies of all the dead shall rise in their integrity, and nothing less than this is meant by the article of the Apostles' Creed, "the resurrection of the body." The same is expressed in the Athanasian Creed (Denz. 137), and is clearly a part of the Catholic faith. This truth is plainly taught by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv.), where he argues that as Christ rose in the body, so must all men rise, for the Head and the members must be conformed. The Apostle assumes the same doctrine in other places (2 Cor. iv. 14; Romans viii. 11); and he made no secret on the matter whether preaching to Jews (Acts xxiii. 6) or to heathens (Acts xvii. 32); the other Apostles taught the same. (Acts iv. 2.) The explicit statement on the matter contained in the ancient creeds dispenses us from the necessity of bringing quotations to prove the doctrine of the Fathers.

Christ Himself spoke on the subject (St. John v. 28, 29), instructing the Jews that the hour was coming wherein all that are in the graves should hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that had done good things should come forth unto the resurrection of life, but they that had done evil unto the resurrection of judgment. The reference to the monuments shows that this passage refers to the resurrection of the body, and it is important as proving that the same reunion awaits the just and the unjust alike. It seems plain that all will rise at the same instant. (1 Cor. xv. 52; Daniel xii. 2.)

That the body that shall rise is the same as that

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which died follows from the notion of rising again; if a new body were created and informed by the soul, no one would say that this man had risen again; some other phrase must be sought to express what had happened, and since no case of the occurrence is known to us, no such phrase is in use. Moreover, the resurrection of Christ is nothing but an anticipation in point of time of that which awaits all men, as St. Paul clearly teaches (1 Cor. xv. 20); and we know that He rose with the same body as died. (St. Luke xxiv. 39.) That which is in the tomb is to come forth when the resurrection day arrives, as we learn from the discourse of Christ quoted a few lines back; and that which is in the tomb is the body that died. The truth is expressly defined by the Fourth Lateran Council, where it is declared that all the dead shall rise again with their bodies which they now have. (Denz. 356.)

There is a passage in the Book of Job (xix. 23—27) which is much insisted on by the Western Fathers as plainly testifying to the future resurrection, and as the words stand in the Vulgate they scarcely admit of any other explanation. The commentaries of the Fathers fully prove what was the traditional faith of their day, and of all days (n. 98); also, we know that the Vulgate is a safe guide on all questions of faith and morals (n. 158), and we are assured that it stands high as a faithful version. But we have no assurance that it is absolutely correct in representing the sense of every passage of the original, and it chances that the words of Job before us, in the Hebrew text, are

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most obscure, so that a great variety of absolutely different translations, including that of the Vulgate, are, at least, plausibly supported. In these circumstances, it seems that we cannot rest on the passage as affording a Scriptural argument for the doctrine of the general resurrection of the flesh. We believe that it does so; but to justify this belief on critical grounds would lead us into a long discussion, not merely as to several obscure points of language, but also as to the scope of the Book of Job, as to which there is much difference of opinion.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh has been vehemently attacked in all ages of the Church; some of the earliest heretics found in it an insurmountable difficulty in the way of their tenet of the essentially evil nature of matter (n. 427), and the rationalizing spirit of modern times prompts men to ask the question *how* this can be (n. 370), and not finding an answer, to reject the revealed truth. We need not consider the earlier form of objection; to the later form, we reply by avowing that we do not know how God's purpose will be worked out, any more than we know how He makes the seed that is sown in the ground to grow into a tree (1 Cor. xv. 35—38); this is the answer given by St. Paul to the question raised by the rationalists of his day. The difficulty sometimes urged that particles which belonged to one man at his death may become part of the body of another man and be his when he dies, is specious but shallow. He that urges it assumes that he knows far more about the constitution of matter, dead and living, and

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concerning what constitutes identity than has as yet been revealed to the researches of chemists, biologists, and metaphysicians; and we must remember that the providence of God is over all His works, and will secure the carrying out of His ends.

It is commonly believed that not merely the spiritual faculties of man, including the memory, will be preserved after the resurrection, and be exercised on suitable objects, but that the same is true of the senses and other bodily objects. The difference of sex will be preserved, but of course there will be no generation of offspring.

837. *The Millennium.*—An opinion has in all ages been widely spread among Christians that before the consummation of all things, a considerable period is to elapse during which the Church on earth will enjoy great prosperity. A thousand years is generally assigned for the duration, which circumstance has led to the followers of the opinion being called Chiliasts (χίλιοι) or Millennarians, the Greek and Latin words signifying Thousand Year Men. The main foundation for the opinion is read in the Apocalypse (xx. 4, 5), and the passage certainly seems at first sight to be sufficiently clear. But we have seen (n. 834) how much obscurity there is in almost all prophecy, and assuredly the Apocalypse is no exception to the rule: there is scarcely a single prophetical passage in this Book concerning the meaning of which there is agreement. In particular, the upholders of the Millennium differ most widely among themselves as to the details and order of

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the events, and the result of their discord is that most students are convinced of the impossibility of arranging any millennial scheme which shall not clash with some points of assured doctrine. Thus, some think that no more is meant than that a long period of peace and prosperity awaits the Church Militant, either before or after the struggle when Antichrist will be overthrown (n. 835); but this view is scarcely consistent with the universal declaration that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Timothy iii. 12); besides which, it is far from what seems to be indicated in the Apocalypse, and whatever is the external state of affairs, each individual man will never be free from that concupiscence (n. 485), which he bears about with him, and which will always be his chief spiritual enemy.

Most chiliastic systems assert a double resurrection, one of the Just alone, the other of the rest of mankind. But we have seen that this cannot be admitted. (n. 836.) As to the nature of millennial happiness, some Christian or half-Christian sects of ancient times did not hesitate to hold out a prospect of pleasure of the lowest, sensual kind, such as is read of in the Talmud and the Koran; other chiliasts talk of a personal reign of Christ on earth, but they are far from agreeing as to its nature; in fact the subject affords scope for the freest exercise of fancy.

In the early days of the Church, chiliastic notions were widely prevalent among Catholics, and it has even been maintained that they were held universally

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to be a part of the revealed faith. This is an exaggeration (Franzelin, *De Tradit.* Th. 16); and fuller consideration led to the rejection of every form of the idea. For many centuries no approved Catholic writer has looked forward to any millennium, and weighty authorities believe that it would be heresy to do so. It is remarkable that the theory which we are considering has always found special favour among those sects which are most bitterly opposed to Rome. These delight in pointing out that the woman who sits on seven hills (Apoc. xvii. 11) is the city called Babylon (xiv. 8, xviii. 2), which is the seat of wickedness and doomed to fall; they quote correctly from the Fathers to show that this city is no other than Rome (n. 272); whence they conclude that the downfall of the Papacy is declared by prophecy. They are wrong, for they fail to observe that the Rome of the Fathers was the Pagan power which was to tread down the Holy City for a while (Apoc. xi. 2), and shed the blood of the Saints. (xvi. 6.)

838. *The Last Judgment.*—It is the faith of the Church, declared in the Creeds, that in the last day, Christ will come again on earth to judge the whole race of mankind; and some extend this Judgment also to the Angels, good and bad. The scene is described by Christ Himself (St. Matt. xxv. 31—46), and the account raises no difficulty, except in connection with the Particular Judgment. (n. 822.) It has been thought that a new Judgment is needless, when sentence has already been passed on each, and in part executed. (n. 823.) It may be enough

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to reply that our insight is not keen enough to see the wisdom of all that God does; but if speculation be permitted, we may say that there is a fitness in this solemn act which marks the close of the time of probation for the race, just as the Particular Judgment closes the probation of each man. Men form a society, and as a society they should be judged, and it is well that all should be assembled to see and acknowledge the justice of God in His dealings, and the fulness with which He avenges those who have suffered tribulation for His sake. It is right, too, that the Sacred Humanity of Christ should receive due honour from all.

839. *The Consummation.*—A few hints may be gathered from Scripture as to the fate of the material world after the Last Judgment; and in the first place it seems that a great change will be wrought, and that fire will be the instrument of this change. In the Ninety-sixth Psalm, the coming of the Judge is described, and we are told that fire goes before Him; this passage, however, must not be pressed, for the Psalmist may be merely borrowing imagery from a thunder-storm, that most stupendous work of nature. But we have a more specific account when we are told (2 St. Peter iii. 10—12) that the day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat, and the works that are in it shall be burnt up; the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with the burning heat. We cannot even grasp what will be the nature of this fire, but we may

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remark that there is no reason to look forward to its involving the heavenly bodies; we know something of the dealings of God with man and with the earth, which is his abode; we are told nothing about the sun and stars.

Even the earth will not be reduced to nothing, but will be renewed in some wonderful fashion. St. Peter tells us, in the sequel of the words just quoted (2 St. Peter iii. 13), that we look for a new heaven and a new earth; and St. Paul teaches that the material world is suffering in some mysterious way from the consequences of the Fall, groaning and travailing in pain, and waiting to be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. (Romans viii. 20—22.) St. John saw a new heaven and a new earth (Apoc. xxi. 1), and he goes on to describe the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem. The scholastics were of opinion that the renovation here foreshadowed will not extend to the organic creation, for they believe that plants and animals were created solely to supply food to man, which will no longer be needed. Some modern theologians of weight regard this as too narrow a view, and think that there are other purposes which these creatures of God may serve.

So here we must leave a most obscure but interesting subject.

840. *Recapitulation.*—In this chapter the great truths of the future resurrection of the body and of future Judgment are shown to be part of the Catholic faith. There are other topics connected with these

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on which it has been thought allowable to say something, in spite of the great obscurity in which they are wrapped. This obscurity springs from the fact that they are known only through unfulfilled prophecy; and proof was given that arguments having this basis are always open to doubt.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

841. *Subject of the Chapter.*—We have said nothing heretofore concerning the Communion of Saints, so far as concerns the relations between members of the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant. It is convenient to postpone this subject until after such account as can be given of the condition of the citizens of the heavenly city, but we must now consider it. We shall see that it is right and useful to honour and invoke all the blessed Saints, and especially the Mother of God; and that honour paid to holy relics, and to whatever object has any special reference to God or to holy persons is laudable. What is said of the Saints applies also to the holy Angels.

842. *The Communion.*—All men are invited to work their way to Heaven in virtue of their being members of the Church (n. 181) on earth, and it would be strange if the fellowship were broken off merely because one had attained his end; we should be prepared to find that each as he passed to Heaven would be filled with increase of love for his fellow-servants. It is no surprise therefore to find this doctrine set forth in Scripture, as when all the

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predestined are called brethren (Romans viii. 29), and men are said to be fellow-citizens of the Saints and domestics of God; and the Saints and Angels rejoice when men do well (St. Luke xv. 7), help them to do so (Hebrews i. 14), and check those who would injure them. (St. Matt. xviii. 10.)

So far there is no difficulty. It will be understood that among Saints we include all the citizens of Heaven, and not merely such as the Church has raised to her altars. (n. 211.) We must go a little further into detail.

843. *Invocation.*—That the Saints are able to pray for us is generally admitted even by Protestants who ridicule the notion that it is profitable for us to ask their prayers. Their nearness of union with God cannot be reasonably supposed to deprive them of the power of prayer which all men on earth possess (n. 607); and that prayer on behalf of others which is called intercession is no more difficult for them than for us. We have many examples in Scripture of the value of the intercession of one man for another, as of Abraham (Genesis xviii. 23; Job xlii. 8); and St. James expressly commands us to pray for one another. (v. 16.) If it be said that the person for whom we pray may not be worthy of the Divine favour which we ask for on his behalf, the reply is that the matter is in the hand of God, who has not promised always to grant such prayers in the precise form asked. (n. 609.) If then any Christian deny that the Saints can intercede for us, it remains for him to prove his point, which he will be unable to do.

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If the Saints can intercede, there is no room to doubt that they do so, for it is a work of charity, and they are perfected in charity.

No objection can be raised to our asking the help of others who are able and willing to aid us, for we have many examples proving that it is useful to ask the prayers of our fellow-men, according to the practice which is universal among those who use prayer at all. In doing so, we merely follow the example of St. Paul (Romans xv. 30; 1 Thess. v. 25), and of all holy people whose lives are written for our instruction; and there is no ground for restricting these applications to the living. We find accordingly that from the earliest ages Christians asked the prayers of the Saints and Martyrs. Such supplications are still to be read as they were sculptured on the tombs where those were laid who died in the Lord. The particulars may be read in *Roma Sotterranea*, and the written records of Christian practice are collected in Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics*.

There is much room for indulgence of personal inclination in the mode of practising prayer to the Saints. No one who considers the admirable dignity of the Blessed Mother of God, and the abundant proofs of love for man which she has given, will fail to have recourse to her; but among the other Saints devotion is much guided by accidental and personal circumstances: name, country, profession, and the like. We need not confine our petitions to canonized Saints, but we may lawfully address ourselves to any one whom

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we reasonably believe to have departed this life in the friendship of God (n. 314), with the precaution however that public invocation must be confined to those whom the Church has raised to her altars; the intercession of others must be asked in private.

844. *Difficulties.*—Certain difficulties are urged against the practice of asking the intercession of the Saints which are specious and easy to understand, and they have therefore taken a great hold upon the minds of many among those who study Catholic usage from without. At the same time they admit of equally easy replies. The chief among them are as follows:

First, it is thought sometimes that by asking the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, injury is done to the supreme dignity of Christ, as the one Mediator. That this dignity belongs to Him has already been proved (n. 540, ix.), and we have also said something in answer to the present difficulty (n. 574), when we spoke of our Lady's share in the redemption of man. We then saw that Christ is Mediator by a right of His own, for He offered the perfect satisfaction to the Father; the privilege that He allows to all His rational creatures of interceding for each other, has nothing in common with His unique mediatorship. And assuredly no injury was done to Christ when St. Paul asked the Roman Christians to pray for him (Romans xv. 30), or when Simon Magus besought the intercession of St. Peter. (Acts viii. 24.) The difficulty goes on some assumption that the

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Catholic practice makes the prayer of a Saint something different in kind from the prayer made by a man on earth; in fact, we allege that there is no difference in kind, however much increase of efficacy results from the holiness of the Saint and his union with God.

Some phrases occur in the Fathers which seem to teach that prayer is to be made to God alone, just as it is their doctrine that to God alone sacrifice is to be offered. (n. 728.) But since these same men certainly asked the prayers of each other, their true meaning cannot have been what is alleged, and in fact it will be found that they are merely protesting against any practice which obscured the supreme dignity of God. The Catholic who invokes a Saint knows well that the person invoked can of his own power do nothing; all his power arises from the bountifulness of God; in this respect it is like the prayer of any man on earth.

Lastly, it is said that we do not know how the Saints can come to a knowledge of our prayers, and from this profession of ignorance, a step is made to the assertion that they cannot possibly know our wants. He that urges this objection assumes that he has knowledge about the condition of the Blessed and concerning life on earth far beyond what has really been granted to men. No one can offer the smallest explanation of the fact that men can convey their thoughts, one to another, by language; how and why certain pulses of air falling on the membrane of my friend's ear lead to his knowing my wishes is an absolutely unsolved mystery; no

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approach has been made to the solution. Moreover, we are altogether ignorant of the laws which govern pure spirits or disembodied spirits in their communications; and it may be as "natural" for them to know the interior thought which any other spirit wishes to make known to them, as it is "natural" for us to gather the like knowledge from signs traced on paper by the hand of him who wishes to communicate with us. We must call to mind the unlimited power of God (n. 387), and we shall cease to doubt His works merely because we do not see how they are done.

845. *Worship of the Saints.*—The word Worship is used in various senses. Often it refers to honour rendered by one man to another on purely civil or personal grounds, having no connection with religion; often it means the honour due from a creature to his Creator. Both these are legitimate uses; but we contend that there is a third true sense, where worship is rendered to a creature, out of a motive of religion. That this may be understood, we must make an analysis of the idea of worship.

All worship is based on a conviction of the worthiness of the object of the worship; that from some point of view he is worthy that we should judge him superior to ourselves. Again, there must be the will to assume the position in regard to him which our intellect has shown us to be suitable. Thirdly, there must be some external act signifying the presence of this interior conviction and will. The worship offered will vary in kind according to

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the ground of the conviction from which it starts. When the ground is some superiority in personal qualities or in some office held in the society to which we belong, the word respect is more usual than worship, but the meaning is the same; we have here civil worship. If the ground is the sense of the infinite superiority of the Creator over the creature, this worship is of the highest possible nature, and receives the special name of *latria*, a Greek word equivalent to the Latin *cultus*, or worship, but restricted by usage to the worship due to God alone. But the conviction may depend upon our sense that some person is far superior to us in holiness and union with God, and we are willing to honour God by outward signs of our regard for this person; this worship is a religious act, and yet is totally different from *latria;* it is called *dulia*, which also is a Greek word meaning service, but appropriated to mean the worship given to the Saints. In the case of the Blessed Virgin, her dignity and closeness to God are so transcendently higher and closer than what any other creature will ever enjoy, that the worship rendered to her is of a higher kind than that rendered to the Saints, and is distinguished as *hyperdulia*, for it is something beyond (ὑπέρ) *dulia*, though still infinitely short of *latria*.

Another distinction may be made. The proper object of worship is always a person. This is so in civil *cultus*, as when we show respect to the King. But the King is also honoured if respect be shown to his statue, or to the royal arms; the marble or

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the painted wood has no claim of its own to respect, but it is honoured on account of its peculiar relation to the King. This is a case of relative *cultus* offered to the thing; it has at once a likeness and an unlikeness to absolute *cultus* which has the King for its object. This same distinction of absolute and relative may be applied to *latria*, *hyperdulia*, and *dulia*.

These explanations will, it is hoped, have made it clear why we are justified in worshipping the Mother of God and the Saints. In worshipping them we worship God, and if we refuse to worship the Saints we deny to God His due. There is glory to all the Saints of God (Psalm cxlix. 9), He Himself glorifies them (1 Kings ii. 30), and we shall not be wrong in doing the like. An infinite gulf must always separate *latria* from *dulia*; but *dulia* is, notwithstanding, true worship, and is due. The practice, as with other devotions, is regulated by the care of the Church, and the usage of Christians, and no acts of worship should be practised in public but such as have received the approval of authority; within these limits, the worship of the Saints is a laudable devotion.

846. *Relics.*—After what has been said as to absolute and relative *cultus* (n. 845), it will be readily understood that respect may be due to material objects which have some special connection with persons to whom we owe absolute *cultus*, and the *cultus* will have the same character. To rob a royal sepulchre, and burn the bones, would be an act redounding to the dishonour of the object of the

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outrage: this would be a case of relative civil disrespect; in like manner, to decorate the tomb of a martyr would be relative *dulia*.

We here see the nature of all honour paid to relics, and we find abundant authority for paying such honour. That thing which God is pleased to use as the instrument of a miracle certainly deserves honour, and this honour may well redound to a Saint on whose account the miracle was worked: and we read in Scripture of the bones of the Prophet Eliseus having been used as means of restoring a dead man to life (4 Kings xiii. 21; Ecclus. xlviii. 14); and garments that had touched the body of St. Paul gained the power of healing sicknesses. (Acts xix. 12.) Nothing that has ever been said by Catholic writers concerning the virtue that resides in relics of the Saints attributes more to them than is ascribed by Holy Scripture.

The Church has never made a declaration concerning any alleged relic that it is genuine, and we therefore never can have certainty on the point. But we are justified in paying honour whenever we have a reasonable probability that the object is what we suppose it to be. (n. 314.)

There is reasonable ground to believe that large portions, if not the whole, of the Cross on which our Saviour suffered came into Christian hands, and still exist. This is an important truth, and it is quite independent of the authority for the story which tells of the Finding of the Cross by St. Helen. St. Cyril, writing at Jerusalem about the year 346 (*Catech.* 10, 19; *P.G.* 33, 686), testifies to the prevail-

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ing belief that the wood of the Cross had been preserved, and that portions were distributed throughout the world, but neither here nor elsewhere can he be quoted as authority for the current story, for some supposed references occur in books of doubtful genuineness. Later writers detail the circumstances of the Finding, but they do not agree in their narrations, and it would be unsafe to rest upon them. But however this may be, it is certainly probable that the existing relics are genuine, and we are therefore reasonably justified in honouring them. Our explanations (n. 845) show that this honour is relative *latria*, paid not to the Person of God, but to an object which had close relation with Him who deserves full direct *latria*. (n. 535.)

Absurd stories are told concerning the collective bulk of the extant relics of the True Cross. It has been shown that if brought together they would not approach the bulk of the burden which was carried by Christ. (See *The Month* for March, 1882, vol. xliv. p. 358.)

The Crucifix, or image of Christ crucified, and even the simple figure of a Cross, deserves the honour of relative *latria*, as is declared in the Pontifical. (*Ordo ad recipiend. Imperatorem.*) But this point introduces us to the general question of the worship of Images.

847. *Images.*—We know that respect is due to statues of Kings and others who are themselves worthy of respect, and this truth naturally suggests that relative *cultus* should be paid to images and paintings of Christ and the Saints. And the

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practice of paying such honour is very ancient in the Church, as the remains in the Catacombs sufficiently testify. Abuses are possible, and have not improbably occurred, and they gave occasion to a heresy. Some of the Byzantine Emperors in the eighth century were pleased to object to the practice which the Church had sanctioned, and ordered the destruction of all sacred images. On this account they received the name of iconoclasts, or image-breakers. (εἰκών, κλάω.) They and the sect that adhered to them were condemned in the year 787 by the Second Council of Nicæa. (Denz. 243), which established the doctrine of the lawfulness of honour paid to images. The history of this dispute is complicated by an attempt of the Emperor Charlemagne to support the heretical party: its chief interest lies in the illustration it affords of the character of the struggle which the Church is forced to carry on unceasingly, to defend her prerogatives against the usurpations of the State. (n. 179.)

The iconoclasts rested on the words which form part of the Decalogue: "Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, . . . thou shalt not adore them nor serve them" (Exodus xx. 4, 5; Deut. v. 8, 9); and Protestants often use the same argument. In reply, we remark that the commandment, whatever its meaning, did not forbid all religious use of images, for God Himself ordered that the propitiatory should be adorned with the figure of a cherub (n. 447) on each side (Exodus xxv. 17—22), and Beseleel was filled with the spirit of God for this very work. (Exodus xxxi. 1—7.) In truth, the

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commandment forbade the Israelites to fashion images and offer *latria* to them, as was done by the nations around them; and this commandment served its purpose, but does not bind Christians.

A charge is often brought against the Catholic Church, that it suppresses this commandment. Nothing can be more untrue: the words are given at full in Catholic Bibles, and in all other places which profess to furnish the complete text; but when the commandments are given in an abbreviated form, as in Catechisms, these words are often omitted: to a Protestant it seems as if this were the omission of a whole commandment, and it may be worth while to explain how the matter stands.

The Commandments are given in two places of Holy Scripture. (Exodus xx.; Deut. v.) They are often spoken of as the Ten Words (Exodus xxxiv. 28, &c.), wherefore they are called the Decalogue, which Greek compound means Ten Words. (δέκα, λόγος.) But nothing shows precisely how the division into ten is effected, and two schemes are equally plausible. In Deuteronomy, the two prohibitions which forbid interior sins of lust and covetousness are put in the same order as those which deal with exterior acts of the same vices, and it seems natural to separate them: in Exodus, the order is inverted, and some interior acts of covetousness are forbidden before the mention of interior lust, and some after it, and no division of the Commandment is possible. In Exodus, therefore, it seems that the number ten must be secured by taking the prohibition of strange gods as the first

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of the Ten, while the prohibition of images forms the second. This arrangement is adopted by the Jews, whom Protestants follow, and it is approved by Origen: the arrangement suggested by Deuteronomy is that of St. Augustine and of the Latin Church generally. It makes the words concerning images an expansion of the denunciation of strange gods, and thus we see why they are omitted when the Commandments are given in an abridged form.

848. *The Sign of the Cross.*—The use of the sign of the Cross is frequent in the ritual of the Catholic Church, and the faithful often make this sign upon their persons. The use requires no justification, for no objection can be raised against it, and experience shows that it nurtures devotion: it is, in fact, a Sacramental. (n. 663.) However, it may be interesting to set down the words of Tertullian which testify to the great antiquity of the practice (*De Coron.* c. 3; *P.L.* 2. 78—80): "At going in and coming out, when putting on garments or shoes, at bath, at table, when the lamps are lighted, when reposing, when sitting, whatever we are doing, we mark our foreheads with the Cross:" and the author claims for the practice the sanction of tradition, which he regards as sufficient, even though Scripture be silent. A Catholic of the present day might say the same.

849. *Recapitulation.*—This chapter has defended Catholic practice in certain outward matters, which are all the more dear because they provoke the peculiar hostility of those that are not Catholics. Also, the Church is defended against the charge, so

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often heard, that she countenances a mutilation of the Decalogue.

850. *Close of the Treatise.*—This Treatise on the Last Things has comprised some matter for which the title will not have prepared the reader, for the invocation of saints and the honour paid to relics are practices of the present life, and are not reserved till the time of death, still less to the day when the present order of the world shall be changed. They are not unfrequently placed by way of appendix to the Treatise on the Incarnation, and not unnaturally, for these minor objects of Christian devotion may suitably be spoken of after the great central Object, God made Man. But the place that we have chosen for them is no less natural, for they concern the condition of the blessed souls in Heaven, and therefore may fairly be postponed until after the account of what is meant by Heaven.

851. *Close of the Work.*—The task that we took in hand is now completed. We have gone through, in such manner as was possible, all the Treatises which are necessarily found in a course of Dogmatic Theology, and have endeavoured to show their mutual connection. The attentive reader will, it is hoped, have gathered sufficient acquaintance with the subjects considered and the method of discussing them to be able profitably to go more deeply into any particular question that may interest him: and all persons, clergy or laity, who are in any way concerned with doctrinal matters may see what is the real teaching of the Catholic Church on every point, and how it is justified: and some perhaps

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who have been accustomed to believe the grotesque misrepresentations that are current in popular literature and in the mouths of men will learn, not without surprise, that the faith and approved practice of the adherents of Rome is not so outrageously opposed to Scripture and reason as they had supposed.

The aim of the writer has been to make the knowledge of that faith and practice accessible to all intelligent readers of English. He cannot hope to have succeeded in avoiding some errors, but he trusts that he has said nothing that is seriously opposed to the teaching of the Church and approved authors; and he will be most thankful to any reader who will have the kindness to call his attention to any mistakes or obscurities. His sole desire is to help to make the truth known, for he is persuaded that the light of this truth will dispel the darkness of prejudice, and lead men to recognize and use the means provided by their Creator to help them to serve Him well in this life and to be happy with Him for ever hereafter.

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